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1797.

ESSAYS

AND

TREATISES

ON

SEVERAL SUBJECTS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

By DAVID HUME, Esq;

VOL. I.

CONTAINING

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ESSAYS

ESSAYS,

MORAL, POLITICAL, AND LITERARY.

PART I*.

ESSAY I.

Of the DELICACY of TASTE and PASSION.

SOME people are ſubject to a certain *delicacy* of *paſſion*, which makes them extremely ſenſible to all the accidents of life, and gives them a lively joy upon every proſperous event, as well as a piercing grief when they meet with misfortunes and adverſity. Favours and good offices eaſily engage their friendſhip; while the ſmalleſt injury provokes their reſentment. Any honour or mark of diſtinction elevates them above meaſure; but they are as ſenſibly touched with contempt. People of this character have, no donbt, more lively enjoyments, as well as more pungent ſorrows, than men of cool and ſedate tempers: But, I believe, when every thing is balanced, there is no one who would not rather be of the latter character, were he entirely maſter of his own diſpoſition. Good or ill fortune is very little at our diſpoſal: And when a perſon, that has this ſenſibility of temper, meets with any misfortune, his ſorrow or reſentment takes entire poſſeſſion of thim, and deprives

* PUBLISHED in 1742.

him of all reliſh in the common occurrences of life; the right enjoyment of which forms the chief part of our happineſs. Great pleaſures are much leſs frequent than great pains; ſo that a ſenſible temper muſt meet with fewer trials in the former way than in the latter. Not to mention, that men of ſuch lively paſſions are apt to be tranſported beyong all bounds of prudence and diſcretion, and to take falſe ſteps in the conduct of life, which are often irretrievable

There is a *delicacy* of *taſte* obſervable in ſome men, which very much reſembles this *delicacy* of *paſſion*, and produces the ſame ſenſibility to beauty and deformity of every kind, as that does to proſperity and adverſity, obligations and injuries. When you preſent a poem or a picture to a man poſſeſſed of this talent, the delicacy of his feeling makes him be ſenſibly touched with every part of it; nor are the maſterly ſtrokes perceived with more exquiſite reliſh and ſatisfaction, than the negligences or abſurdities with diſguſt and uneaſineſs. A polite and judicious converſation affords him the higheſt entertainment; rudeneſs or impertinence is as great a puniſhment to him. In ſhort, delicacy of taſte has the ſame effect as delicay of paſſion: It enlarges the ſphere both of our happineſs and miſery, and makes us ſenſible to pains as well as pelaſures which eſcape the reſt of mankind.

I believe, however, every one will agree with me, that, notwithſtanding this reſemblance, delicacy of taſte is as much to be deſired and cultivated, as delicacy of paſſion is to be lamented, and to be remdied if poſſible. The good or ill accidents of life are very little at our diſpoſal; but we are pretty much maſters what books we ſhall read, what diverſions we ſhall partake of, and what company we ſhall keep. Philoſophers have endeavoured to render happineſs entirely independent of every thing external. That degree of perfection is impoſſible to be *attained:* But every wiſe man will endeavour to place his happineſs on ſuch objects chiefly as depend upon himſelf; and that is not to be *attained*

ſo

ſo much by any other means as by this delicacy of ſentiment. When a man is poſſeſſed of that talent, he is more happy by what pleaſes his taſte than by what gratifies his appetites, and receives more enjoyment from a poem or a piece of reaſoning than the moſt expenſive luxury can afford.

Whatever connexion there may be originally between theſe two ſpecies of delicacy, I am perſuaded, that nothing is ſo proper to cure us of this delicacy of paſſion, as the cultivating of that higher and more refined taſte, which enables us to judge of the characters of men, of compoſitions of genius, and of the productions of the nobler arts. A greater or leſs reliſh for thoſe obvious beauties which ſtrike the ſenſes, depends entirely upon the greater or leſs ſenſibility of the temper: But with regard to the ſciences and liberal arts, a fine taſte is, in ſome meaſure, the ſame with ſtrong ſenſe; or at leaſt depends ſo much upon it, that they are inſeparable. In order to judge aright of a compoſition of genius, there are ſo many views to be taken in, ſo many circumſtances to be compared, and ſuch a knowledge of human nature requiſite, that no man, who is not poſſeſſed of the ſoundeſt judgment, will ever make a tolerable critic in ſuch performances. And this is a new reaſon for cultivating a reliſh in the liberal arts. Our judgment will ſtrengthen by this exerciſe: We ſhall form juſter notions of life: Many things, which pleaſe or afflict others, will appear to us too frivolous to engage our attention: And we ſhall loſe by degrees that ſenſibility and delicacy of paſſion which is ſo incommodious.

But perhaps I have gone too far, in ſaying that a cultivated taſte for the polite arts extinguiſhes the paſſions, and renders us indifferent to thoſe objects which are ſo fondly purſued by the reſt of mankind. On farther reflection, I find, that it rather improves our ſenſibility for all the tender and agreeable paſſions; at the ſame time that it renders the mind incapable of the rougher and more boiſterous emotions.

Ingenuas didiciſſe fideliter artes,
Emollit mores, nec ſinit eſſe feros.

For this, I think, there may be aſſigned two very natural reaſons. In the *firſt* place, nothing is ſo improving to the temper as the ſtudy of the beauties, either of poetry, eloquence, muſic, or painting. They give a certain elegance of ſentiment to which the reſt of mankind are ſtrangers. The emotions which they excite are ſoft and tender. They draw off the mind from the hurry of buſineſs and intereſt; cheriſh reflection; diſpoſe to tranquillity; and produce an agreeable melancholy, which, of all diſpoſitions of the mind, is the beſt ſuited to love and friendſhip.

In the *ſecond* place, a delicacy of taſte is favourable to love and friendſhip, by confining our choice to few people, and making us indifferent to the company and converſation of the greater part of men. You will ſeldom find that mere men of the world, whatever ſtrong ſenſe they may be endowed with, are very nice in diſtinguiſhing characters, or in marking thoſe inſenſible differences and gradations which make one man preferable to another. Any one that has competent ſenſe, is ſufficient for their entertainment: They talk to him of their pleaſure and affairs with the ſame frankneſs that they would to another; and finding many who are fit to ſupply his place, they never feel any vacancy or want in his abſence. But to make uſe of the alluſion of a celebrated French † author, the judgment may be compared to a clock or watch, where the moſt ordinary machine is ſufficient to tell the hours; but the moſt elaborate alone can point out the minutes and ſeconds, and diſtinguiſh the ſmalleſt differences of time. One that has well digeſted his knowledge both of books and men, has little enjoyment but in the company of a few ſelect companions. He feels too ſenſibly, how much all the reſt of mankind fall ſhort of the notions which he has entertained. And, his affections being thus confined within

† *Monſ.* FONTENELLE, *Pluralité des Mondes.* Soir 6.

within a narrow circle, no wonder he carries them further than if they were more general and undiſtinguiſhed. The gaiety and frolic of a bottle-companion improves with him into a ſolid friendſhip; and the ardours of a youthful appetite become an elegant paſſion.

ESSAY II.

Of the LIBERTY of the PRESS.

NOTHING is more apt to ſurpriſe a foreigner, than the extreme liberty which we enjoy in this country, of communicating whatever we pleaſe to the public, and of openly cenſuring every meaſure entered into by the king or his miniſters. If the adminiſtration reſolve upon war, it is affirmed, that, either wilfully or ignorantly, they miſtake the intereſts of the nation; and that peace, in the preſent ſituation of affairs, is infinitely preferable. If the paſſion of the miniſters lie towards peace, our political writers breathe nothing but war and devaſtation, and repreſent the pacific conduct of the government as mean and puſillanimous. As this liberty is not indulged in any other government, either republican or monarchical; in HOLLAND and VENICE, more than in FRANCE or SPAIN; it may very naturally give occaſion to a queſtion, *How it happens that* GREAT BRITAIN *alone enjoys this peculiar privilege?*

The reaſon why the laws indulge us in ſuch a liberty, ſeems to be derived from our mixed form of government, which is neither wholly monarchical nor wholly republican. It will be found, if I miſtake not, a true obſervation in politics, that the two extremes in government, liberty and ſlavery, commonly approach neareſt to each other; and that, as you depart from the extremes, and mix a little of monarchy with liberty, the govern-

ment becomes always the more free; and, on the other hand, when you mix a little of liberty with monarchy, the yoke becomes always the more grievous and intolerable. In a government such as that of FRANCE, which is absolute, and where law, custom, and religion concur, all of them, to make the people fully satisfied with their condition, the monarch cannot entertain any *jealousy* against his subjects, and therefore is apt to indulge them in great *liberties* both of speech and action. In a government altogether republican, such as that of HOLLAND, where there is no magistrate so eminent as to give *jealousy* to the state, there is no danger in intrusting the magistrates with large discretionary powers; and though many advantages result from such powers, in preserving peace and order, yet they lay a considerable restraint on mens actions, and make every private citizen pay a great respect to the government. Thus it seems evident, that the two extremes of absolute monarchy and of a republic, approach near to each other in some material circumstances. In the *first*, the magistrate has no jealousy of the people; in the *second*, the people have none of the magistrate: Which want of jealousy begets a mutual confidence and trust in both cases; and produces a species of liberty in monarchies, and of arbitrary power in republics.

To justify the other part of the foregoing observation, that, in every government, the means are most wide of each other, and that the mixtures of monarchy and liberty render the yoke either more easy or more grievous; I must take notice of a remark in TACITUS with regard to the ROMANS under the emperors, that they neither could bear total slavery nor total liberty; *Nec totam servitutem, nec totam libertatem pati possunt.* This remark a celebrated poet has transfated and applied to the ENGLISH, in his lively description of queen ELIZABETH's policy and government,

Et fit aimer son joug à l'Anglois indompté,
Qui ne peut ni servir, ni vivre en liberté.

HENRIADE, *liv.* 1.

Accor-

According to these remarks, we are to consider the ROMAN government under the emperors as a mixture of despotism and liberty, where the despotism prevailed; and the ENGLISH government as a mixture of the same kind, where the liberty predominates. The consequences are conformable to the foregoing observation; and such as may be expected from those mixed forms of government, which beget a mutual watchfulness and jealousy. The ROMAN emperors were, many of them, the most frightful tyrants that ever disgraced human nature; and it is evident, that their cruelty was chiefly excited by their *jealousy*, and by their observing that all the great men of ROME bore with impatience the dominion of a family, which, but a little before, was nowise superior to their own. On the other hand, as the republican part of the government prevails in ENGLAND, though with a great mixture of monarchy, it is obliged, for its own preservation, to maintain a watchful *jealousy* over the magistrates, to remove all discretionary powers, and to secure every one's life and fortune by general and inflexible laws. No action must be deemed a crime but what the law has plainly determined to be such: No crime must be imputed to a man but from a legal proof before his judges; and even these judges must be his fellow-subjects, who are obliged, by their own interest, to have a watchful eye over the encroachments and violence of the ministers. From these causes it proceeds, that there is as much liberty, and even, perhaps, licentiousness, in GREAT BRITAIN, as there were formerly slavery and tyranny in ROME.

These principles account for the great liberty of the press in these kingdoms, beyond what is indulged in any other government. It is apprehended, that arbitrary power would steal in upon us, were we not careful to prevent its progress, and were there not an easy method of conveying the alarm from one end of the kingdom to the other. The spirit of the people must frequently be roused, in order to curb the ambition of the court; and the dread of rousing this spirit must be employed to

prevent that ambition. Nothing is so effectual to this purpose as the liberty of the press; by which all the learning, wit, and genius of the nation, may be employed on the side of freedom, and every one be animated to its defence. As long, therefore, as the republican part of our government can maintain itself against the monarchical, it will naturally be careful to keep the press open, as of importance to its own preservation.

It must however be allowed, that the unbounded liberty of the press, though it be difficult, perhaps impossible, to propose a suitable remedy for it, is one of the evils attending those mixed forms of government.

ESSAY III.

That POLITICS may be reduced to a SCIENCE.

IT is a question with several, Whether there be any essential difference between one form of government and another? and, Whether every form may not become good or bad, according as it is well or ill administered *? Were it once admitted, that all governments are alike, and that the only difference consists in the character and conduct of the governors, most political disputes would be at an end, and all *Zeal* for one constitution above another must be esteemed mere bigotry and folly. But, though a friend to moderation, I cannot forbear condemning this sentiment, and should be sorry to think, that human affairs admit of no greater stability than what they receive from the casual humours and characters of particular men.

It

* *For forms of government let fools contest,*
Whate'er is best administer'd is best.
ESSAY on MAN, Book 3.

It is true, those who maintain that the goodness of all government consists in the goodness of the administration, may cite many particular instances in history, where the very same government, in different hands, has varied suddenly into the two opposite extremes of good and bad. Compare the FRENCH government under HENRY III. and under HENRY IV. Oppression, levity, artifice, on the part of the rulers; faction, sedition, treachery, rebellion, disloyalty, on the part of the subjects: These compose the character of the former miserable æra. But when the patriot and heroic prince who succeeded, was once firmly seated on the throne, the government, the people, every thing seemed to be totally changed; and all from the difference of the temper and conduct of these two sovereigns. Instances of this kind may be multiplied almost without number, from ancient as well as modern history, foreign as well as domestic.

But here it may be proper to make a distinction. All absolute governments must very much depend on the administration; and this is one of the great inconveniences attending that form of government. But a republican and free government would be an obvious absurdity, if the particular checks and controuls, provided by the constitution, had really no influence, and made it not the interest, even of bad men, to act for the public good. Such is the intention of these forms of government; and such is their real effect, where they are wisely constituted: As on the other hand, they are the source of all disorder, and of the blackest crimes, where either skill or honesty has been wanting in their original frame and institution.

So great is the force of laws, and of particular forms of government, and so little dependence have they on the humours and tempers of men, that consequences almost as general and certain may sometimes be deduced from them, as any which the mathematical sciences afford us.

The constitution of the ROMAN republic gave the whole legislative power to the people, without allowing a negative voice either to the nobility or consuls. This un-

unbounded power they poſſeſſed in a collective, not in a repreſentative, body. The conſequences were: When the people, by ſucceſs and conqueſt, had become very numerous, and had ſpread themſelves to a great diſtance from the capital, the city-tribes, though the moſt contemptible, carried almoſt every vote: They were, therefore, moſt cajoled by every one that affected popularity: They were ſupported in idleneſs by the general diſtribution of corn, and by particular bribes, which they received from almoſt every candidate: By this means they became every day more licentious, and the CAMPUS MARTIUS was a perpetual ſcene of tumult and ſedition: Armed ſlaves were introduced among theſe raſcally citizens, ſo that the whole government fell into anarchy; and the greateſt happineſs which the ROMANS could look for, was the deſpotic power of the CÆSARS. Such are the effects of democracy without a repreſentative.

A Nobility may poſſeſs the whole, or any part of the legiſlative power of a ſtate, in two different ways. Either every nobleman ſhares the power as part of the whole body; or the whole body enjoys the power as compoſed of parts, which have each a diſtinct power and authority. The VENETIAN ariſtocracy is an inſtance of the firſt kind of government: The POLISH of the ſecond. In the VENETIAN government, the whole body of nobility poſſeſſes the whole power, and no nobleman has any authority which he receives not from the whole. In the POLISH government, every nobleman, by means of his fiefs, has a diſtinct hereditary authority over his vaſſals; and the whole body has no authority but what it receives from the concurrence of its parts. The different operations and tendencies of theſe two ſpecies of government might be made apparent even *à priori*. A VENETIAN nobility is preferable to a POLISH, let the humours and education of men be ever ſo much varied. A nobility, who poſſeſs their power in common, will preſerve peace and order both among themſelves and their ſubjects; and no member can have authority enough to controul the laws for a moment. The nobles will preſerve their autho-

authority over the people; but without any grievous tyranny, or any breach of private property; becauſe ſuch a tyrannical government promotes not the intereſts of the whole body, however it may that of ſome individuals. There will be a diſtinction of rank between the nobility and people, but this will be the only diſtinction in the ſtate. The whole nobility will form one body, and the whole people another, without any of thoſe private feuds and animoſities which ſpread ruin and deſolation every where. It is eaſy to ſee the diſadvantages of a POLISH nobility in every one of theſe particulars.

It is impoſſible ſo to conſtitute a free government, as that a ſingle perſon, call him doge, prince, or king, ſhall poſſeſs a large ſhare of power, and ſhall form a proper balance or counterpoiſe to the other parts of the legiſlature. This chief magiſtrate may be either *elective* or *hereditary;* and though the former inſtitution may, to a ſuperficial view, appear the moſt advantageous, yet a more accurate inſpection will diſcover in it greater inconveniences than in the latter, and ſuch as are founded on cauſes and principles eternal and immutable. The filling of the throne, in ſuch a government, is a point of too great and too general intereſt, not to divide the whole people into factions: Whence a civil war, the greateſt of ills, may be apprehended, almoſt with certainty, upon every vacancy. The prince elected muſt be either a *Foreigner* or a *Native:* The former will be ignorant of the people whom he is to govern; ſuſpicious of his new ſubjects, and ſuſpected by them; giving his confidence entirely to ſtrangers, who will have no other care but of enriching themſelves in the quickeſt manner while their maſter's favour and authority are able to ſupport them. A native will carry into the throne all his private animoſities and friendſhips, and will never be viewed in his elevation, without exciting the ſentiment of envy in thoſe who formerly conſidered him as their equal. Not to mention that a crown is too high a reward ever to be given to merit alone; and will always induce the candidates to employ force, or money, or intrigue,

intrigue, to procure the votes of the electors: So that such an election will give no better chance for superior merit in the prince, than if the state had trusted to birth alone for determining their sovereign.

It may therefore be pronounced as an universal axiom in politics, *That an hereditary prince, a nobility without vassals, and a people voting by their representatives, form the best* MONARCHY, ARISTOCRACY, *and* DEMOCRACY. But in order to prove more fully, that politics admit of general truths, which are invariable by the humour or education either of subject or sovereign, it may not be amiss to observe some other principles of this science, which may seem to deserve that character.

It may easily be observed, that though free governments have been commonly the most happy for those who partake of their freedom; yet are they the most ruinous and oppressive to their provinces: And this observation may, I believe, be fixed as a maxim of the kind we are here speaking of. When a monarch extends his dominions by conquest, he soon learns to consider his old and his new subjects as on the same footing; because, in reality, all his subjects are to him the same, except the few friends and favourites with whom he is personally acquainted. He does not, therefore, make any distinction between them in his *general* laws; and, at the same time, is careful to prevent all *particular* acts of oppression on the one as well as on the other. But a free state necessarily makes a great distinction; and must always do so, till men learn to love their neighbours as well as themselves. The conquerors, in such a government, are all legislators; and will be sure to contrive matters, by restrictions on trade and by taxes, so as to draw some private as well as public advantage from their conquests. Provincial governors have also a better chance, in a republic, to escape with their plunder, by means of bribery or intrigue; and their fellow-citizens, who find their own state to be enriched by the spoils of the subject provinces, will be the more inclined to tolerate such abuses. Not to mention, that it is a necessary precaution

tion in a free ſtate to change the governors frequently; which obliges theſe temporary tyrants to be more expeditious and rapacious, that they may accumulate ſufficient wealth before they give place to their ſucceſſors. What cruel tyrants were the ROMANS over the world during the time of the commonwealth! It is true, they had laws to prevent oppreſſion in their provincial magiſtrates; but CICERO informs us, that the ROMANS could not better conſult the intereſts of the provinces than by repealing theſe very laws. For in that caſe, ſays he, our magiſtrates, having entire impunity, would plunder no more than would ſatisfy their own rapaciouſneſs; whereas, at preſent, they muſt alſo ſatisfy that of their judges, and of all the great men in ROME, of whoſe protection they ſtand in need. Who can read of the cruelties and oppreſſions of VERRES without horror and aſtoniſhment? And who is not touched with indignation to hear, that after CICERO had exhauſted on that abandoned criminal all the thunders of his eloquence, and had prevailed ſo far as to get him condemned to the utmoſt extent of the laws; yet that cruel tyrant lived peaceably to old age, in opulence and eaſe; and, thirty years afterwards, was put into the proſcription by MARK ANTHONY, on account of his exorbitant wealth, where he fell with CICERO himſelf and all the moſt virtuous men of ROME? After the diſſolution of the commonwealth, the ROMAN yoke became eaſier upon the provinces, as TACITUS informs us *; and it may be obſerved, that many of the worſt emperors, DOMITIAN † for inſtance, were careful to prevent all oppreſſion on the provinces. In ‡ TIBERIUS's time, GAUL was eſteemed richer than ITALY itſelf; nor do I find, during the whole time of the ROMAN monarchy, that the empire became leſs rich or populous in any of its provinces, though indeed its valour and military diſcipline were always upon the decline. The oppreſ-

* Ann. lib. 1. cap. 2. † SUET. in vita DOMIT.

‡ *Egregium reſumendæ libertati tempus, ſi ipſi florentes, quam inops* ITALIA, *quam imbellis urbana plebs, nihil validum in exercitibus, niſi quod externum cogitarent.* TACIT. Ann. lib. 3.

oppreſſion and tyranny of the CARTHAGINIANS over their ſubject-ſtates in AFRICA went ſo far, as we learn from POLYBIUS *, that, not content with exacting the half of all the produce of the land, which of itſelf was a very high rent, they alſo loaded them with many other taxes. If we paſs from ancient to modern times, we ſhall ſtill find the obſervation to hold. The provinces of abſolute monarchies are always better treated than thoſe of free ſtates. Compare the *Païs conquis* of FRANCE with IRELAND, and you will be convinced of this truth; though this latter kingdom, being in a good meaſure peopled from ENGLAND, poſſeſſes ſo many rights and privileges as ſhould naturally make it challenge better treatment than that of a conquered province. CORSICA is alſo an obvious inſtance to the ſame purpoſe.

There is an obſervation in MACHIAVEL with regard to the conqueſts of ALEXANDER the Great, which, I think, may be regarded as one of thoſe eternal political truths which no time nor accidents can vary. It may ſeem ſtrange, ſays that politician, that ſuch ſudden conqueſts as thoſe of ALEXANDER ſhould be poſſeſſed ſo peaceably by his ſucceſſors; and that the PERSIANS, during all the confuſions and civil wars among the GREEKS, never made the ſmalleſt effort towards the recovery of their former independent government. To ſatisfy us concerning the cauſe of this remarkable event, we may conſider, that a monarch may govern his ſubjects in two different ways. He may either follow the maxims of the eaſtern princes, and ſtretch his authority ſo far as to leave no diſtinction of rank among his ſubjects but what proceeds immediately from himſelf; no advantages of birth; no hereditary honours and poſſeſſions; and, in a word, no credit among the people, except from his commiſſion alone. Or a monarch may exert his power after a milder manner, like other EUROPEAN princes, and leave other ſources of honour beſide his ſmile and favour; birth, titles, poſſeſſions, valour, integrity, knowledge, or great and fortunate atchievements. In the

* Lib. 1. cap. 72.

former ſpecies of government, after a conqueſt, it is impoſſible ever to ſhake off the yoke, ſince no one poſſeſſes among the people ſo much perſonal credit and authority as to begin ſuch an enterpriſe; whereas, in the latter, the leaſt misfortune or diſcord among the victors will encourage the vanquiſhed to take arms, who have leaders ready to prompt and conduct them in every undertaking *.

Such is the reaſoning of MACHIAVEL, which ſeems ſolid and concluſive; though I wiſh he had not mixed falſehood with truth, in aſſerting, that monarchies, governed according to eaſtern policy, though more eaſily kept when once ſubdued, yet are the moſt difficult to ſubdue; ſince they cannot contain any powerful ſubject, whoſe diſcontent and faction may facilitate the enterpriſes of an enemy. For, beſides that ſuch a tyrannical government enervates the courage of men, and renders them indifferent towards the fortunes of their ſovereign; beſides this, I ſay, we find by experience, that even the temporary and delegated authority of the generals and magiſtrates, being always in ſuch governments as abſolute within its ſphere as that of the prince himſelf, is able, with barbarians accuſtomed to a blind ſubmiſſion, to produce the moſt dangerous and fatal revolutions. So that, in every reſpect, a gentle government is preferable, and gives the greateſt ſecurity to the ſovereign as well as to the ſubject.

Legiſlators, therefore, ought not to truſt the future government of a ſtate entirely to chance, but ought to provide a ſyſtem of laws to regulate the adminiſtration of public affairs to the lateſt poſterity. Effects will always correſpond to cauſes; and wiſe regulations, in any commonwealth, are the moſt valuable legacy that can be left to future ages. In the ſmalleſt court or office, the ſtated forms and methods by which buſineſs muſt be conducted, are found to be a conſiderable check on the natural depravity of mankind. Why ſhould not the caſe be the ſame in public affairs? Can we aſcribe the ſtability

* See NOTE [A].

lity and wisdom of the VENETIAN government, through so many ages, to any thing but the form of government? And is it not easy to point out those defects in the original constitution which produced the tumultuous governments of ATHENS and ROME, and ended at last in the ruin of these two famous republics? And so little dependence has this affair on the humours and education of particular men, that one part of the same republic may be wisely conducted, and another weakly, by the very same men, merely on account of the difference of the forms and institutions by which these parts are regulated. Historians inform us that this was actually the case with GENOA. For while the state was always full of sedition and tumult and disorder, the bank of St GEORGE, which had become a considerable part of the people, was conducted for several ages with the utmost integrity and wisdom *.

The ages of greatest public spirit are not always most eminent for private virtue. Good laws may beget order and moderation in the government where the manners and customs have instilled little humanity or justice into the tempers of men. The most illustrious period of the ROMAN history, considered in a political view, is that between the beginning of the first and end of the last PUNIC war; the due balance between the nobility and people being then fixed by the contests of the tribunes, and not being yet lost by the extent of conquests. Yet at this very time the horrid practice of poisoning was so common, that, during part of a season, a *Prætor* punished capitally for this crime above three thousand † persons in a part of ITALY; and found informations of this nature

4 still

* *Essempio veramente raro, & da Filosofi intante loro imaginate & vedute Republiche mai non trovato, vedere dentro ad un medesimo cerchio, fra medesimi cittadini, la liberta, & la tirannide, la vita civile & la corotta, la giustitia & la licenza; perche quello ordine solo mantiere quella citta piena di costumi antichi & venerabili. E s'egli auteniſſe (che col tempo in ogni modo auverrà) que* SAN GIORGIO *tutta quel la città occupaſſe, ſarrebbe quella una Republica piu dalla.* VENETIANA *memorabile.* Della Hist. Florentine, lib. 8.

† T. LIVII, lib. 40. cap. 43.

ſtill multiplying upon him. There is a ſimilar, or rather a worſe inſtance *, in the more early times of the commonwealth. So depraved in private life were that people, whom in their hiſtories we ſo much admire. I doubt not but they were really more virtuous during the time of the two *Triumvirates*, when they were tearing their common country to pieces, and ſpreading ſlaughter and deſolation over the face of the earth, merely for the choice of tyrants †.

Here, then, is a ſufficient inducement to maintain with the utmoſt ZEAL, in every free ſtate, thoſe forms and inſtitutions by which liberty is ſecured, the public good conſulted, and the avarice or ambition of particular men reſtrained and puniſhed. Nothing does more honour to human nature, than to ſee it ſuſceptible of ſo noble a paſſion; as nothing can be a greater indication of meanneſs of heart in any man, than to ſee him deſtitute of it. A man who loves only himſelf, without regard to friendſhip and deſert, merits the ſevereſt blame; and a man who is only ſuſceptible of friendſhip, without public ſpirit or a regard to the community, is deficient in the moſt material part of virtue.

But this is a ſubject which needs not be longer inſiſted on at preſent. There are enow of zealots on both ſides who kindle up the paſſions of their partiſans, and, under pretence of public good, purſue the intereſts and ends of their particular faction. For my part, I ſhall always be more fond of promoting moderation than zeal; though perhaps the ſureſt way of producing moderation in every party is to increaſe our zeal for the public. Let us therefore try, if it be poſſible, from the foregoing doctrine, to draw a leſſon of moderation with regard to the parties into which our country is at preſent divided; at the ſame time, that we allow not this moderation to abate the induſtry and paſſion with which every individual is bound to purſue the good of his country.

* T. LIV. lib. 8. cap. 18.

† *L'Aigle contre L'Aigle,* ROMAINS *contre* ROMAINS,
Combatans ſeulement pour le choix de tyrans. CORNEILLE.

Thoſe who either attack or defend a miniſter in ſuch a government as ours, where the utmoſt liberty is allowed, always carry matters to an extreme, and exaggerate his merit or demerit with regard to the public. His enemies are ſure to charge him with the greateſt enormities both in domeſtic and foreign management; and there is no meanneſs or crime of which, in their account, he is not capable. Unneceſſary wars, ſcandalous treaties, profuſion of public treaſure, oppreſſive taxes, every kind of mal-adminiſtration is aſcribed to him. To aggravate the charge, his pernicious conduct, it is ſaid, will extend its baneful influence even to poſterity, by undermining the beſt conſtitution in the world, and diſordering that wiſe ſyſtem of laws, inſtitutions, and cuſtoms, by which our anceſtors, during ſo many centuries, have been ſo happily governed. He is not only a wicked miniſter in himſelf, but has removed every ſecurity provided againſt wicked miniſters for the future.

On the other hand, the partiſans of the miniſter make his panegyric run as high as the accuſation againſt him, and celebrate his wiſe, ſteady, and moderate conduct in every part of his adminiſtration. The honour and intereſt of the nation ſupported abroad, public credit maintained at home, perſecution reſtrained, faction ſubdued; the merit of all theſe bleſſings is aſcribed ſolely to the miniſter. At the ſame time, he crowns all his other merits by a religious care of the beſt conſtitution in the world, which he has preſerved in all its parts, and has tranſmitted entire, to be the happineſs and ſecurity of the lateſt poſterity.

When this accuſation and panegyric are received by the partiſans of each party, no wonder they beget an extraordinary ferment on both ſides, and fill the nation with violent animoſities. But I would fain perſuade theſe party-zealots, that there is a flat contradiction both in the accuſation and panegyric; and that it were impoſſible for either of them to run ſo high, were it not for this contradiction. If our conſtitution be really *that noble fabric, the pride of* BRITAIN, *the envy of our neighbours,*

bours, raiſed by the labour of ſo many centuries, repaired at the expence of ſo many millions, and cemented by ſuch a profuſion of blood *; I ſay, if our conſtitution does in any degree deſerve theſe eulogies, it would never have ſuffered a wicked and weak miniſter to govern triumphantly for a courſe of twenty years, when oppoſed by the greateſt geniuſes in the nation, who exerciſed the utmoſt liberty of tongue and pen, in parliament, and in their frequent appeals to the people. But if the miniſter be wicked and weak to the degree ſo ſtrenuouſly inſiſted on, the conſtitution muſt be faulty in its original principles; and he cannot conſiſtently be charged with undermining the beſt form of government in the world. A conſtitution is only ſo far good, as it provides a remedy againſt mal-adminiſtration; and if the BRITISH, when in its greateſt vigour, and repaired by two ſuch remarkable events as the *Revolution* and *Acceſſion*, by which our ancient royal family was ſacrificed to it; if our conſtitution, I ſay, with ſo great advantages, does not, in fact, provide any ſuch remedy, we are rather beholden to any miniſter who undermines it, and affords us an opportunity of erecting a better in its place.

I would employ the ſame topics to moderate the zeal of thoſe who defend the miniſter. *Is our conſtitution ſo excellent?* Then a change of miniſtry can be no ſuch dreadful event; ſince it is eſſential to ſuch a conſtitution, in every miniſtry, both to preſerve itſelf from violation, and to prevent all enormities in the adminiſtration. *Is our conſtitution very bad?* Then ſo extraordinary a jealouſy and apprehenſion on account of changes is ill placed; and a man ſhould no more be anxious in this caſe, than a huſband, who had married a woman from the ſtews, ſhould be watchful to prevent her infidelity. Public affairs, in ſuch a government, muſt neceſſarily go to confuſion, by whatever hands they are conducted; and the zeal of *patriots* is in that caſe much leſs requiſite than the patience and ſubmiſſion of *philoſophers*. The virtue and good intentions of CATO and BRUTUS are

* *Diſſertation on Parties*, Letter 10.

highly laudable; but to what purpose did their zeal serve? Only to hasten the fatal period of the ROMAN government, and render its convulsions and dying agonies more violent and painful.

I would not be understood to mean, that public affairs deserve no care and attention at all. Would men be moderate and consistent, their claims might be admitted, at least might be examined. The *country-party* might still assert, that our constitution, though excellent, will admit of mal-administration to a certain degree; and therefore, if the minister be bad, it is proper to oppose him with a *suitable* degree of zeal. And, on the other hand, the *court-party* may be allowed, upon the supposition that the minister were good, to defend, and with *some* zeal too, his administration. I would only persuade men not to contend as if they were fighting *pro aris & focis*, and change a good constitution into a bad one by the violence of their factions.

I have not here considered any thing that is personal in the present controversy. In the best civil constitution, where every man is restrained by the most rigid laws, it is easy to discover either the good or bad intentions of a minister, and to judge whether his personal character deserve love or hatred. But such questions are of little importance to the public, and lay those who employ their pens upon them under a just suspicion either of malevolence or of flattery.

ESSAY

ESSAY IV.

Of the First Principles of Government.

NOTHING appears more surprising to those who consider human affairs with a philosophical eye, than the easiness with which the many are governed by the few, and the implicit submission with which men resign their own sentiments and passions to those of their rulers. When we inquire by what means this wonder is effected, we shall find, that as Force is always on the side of the governed, the governors have nothing to support them but opinion It is therefore on opinion only that government is founded; and this maxim extends to the most despotic and most military governments, as well as to the most free and most popular. The soldan of Egypt, or the emperor of Rome, might drive his harmless subjects, like brute beasts, against their sentiments and inclinations: But he must, at least, have led his *mamelukes* or *prætorian bands*, like men, by their opinion.

Opinion is of two kinds; to wit, opinion of interest, and opinion of right. By opinion of interest, I chiefly understand the sense of the general advantage which is reaped from government; together with the persuasion, that the particular government which is established, is equally advantageous with any other that could easily be settled. When this opinion prevails among the generality of a state, or among those who have the force in their hands, it gives great security to any government.

Right is of two kinds; right to Power and right to Property: What prevalence opinion of the first kind has over mankind, may easily be understood, by observing the attachment which all nations have to their ancient government, and even to those names which have had the sanction of antiquity. Antiquity always be-

gets the opinion of right; and whatever disadvantageous sentiments we may entertain of mankind, they are always found to be prodigal both of blood and treasure in the maintenance of public justice. There is, indeed, no particular, in which, at first sight, there may appear a greater contradiction in the frame of the human mind than the present. When men act in a faction, they are apt, without shame or remorse, to neglect all the ties of honour and morality, in order to serve their party; and yet when a faction is formed upon a point of right or principle, there is no occasion where men discover a greater obstinacy, and a more determined sense of justice and equity. The same social disposition of mankind is the cause of these contradictory appearances.

It is sufficiently understood, that the opinion of right to property is of moment in all matters of government. A noted author has made property the foundation of all government; and most of our political writers seem inclined to follow him in that particular. This is carrying the matter too far; but still it must be owned, that the opinion of right to property has a great influence in this subject.

Upon these three opinions therefore, of public *interest*, of *right to power*, and of *right to property*, are all governments founded, and all authority of the few over the many. There are indeed other principles, which add force to these, and determine, limit, or alter their operation; such as *self-interest*, *fear*, and *affection*: But still we may assert, that these other principles can have no influence alone, but suppose the antecedent influence of those opinions above-mentioned. They are, therefore, to be esteemed the secondary, not the original principles of government.

For, *first*, as to *self-interest*, by which I mean the expectation of particular rewards, distinct from the general protection which we receive from government, it is evident that the magistrate's authority must be antecedently established, at least be hoped for, in order to produce this expectation. The prospect of reward may aug-

augment his authority with regard to ſome particular perſons; but can never give birth to it with regard to the public. Men naturally look for the greateſt favours from their friends and acquaintance; and therefore the hopes of any conſiderable number of the ſtate would never centre in any particular ſet of men, if theſe men had no other title to magiſtracy, and had no ſeparate influence over the opinions of mankind. The ſame obſervation may be extended to the other two principles of *fear* and *affection*. No man would have any reaſon to *fear* the fury of a tyrant, if he had no authority over any but from fear; ſince, as a ſingle man, his bodily force can reach but a ſmall way, and all the farther power he poſſeſſes muſt be founded either on our own opinion, or on the preſumed opinion of others. And though *affection* to wiſdom and virtue in a *ſovereign* extends very far, and has great influence; yet he muſt antecedently be ſuppoſed inveſted with a public character, otherwiſe the public eſteem will ſerve him in no ſtead, nor will his virtue have any influence beyond a narrow ſphere.

A Government may endure for ſeveral ages, though the balance of power and the balance of property do not coincide. This chiefly happens where any rank or order of the ſtate has acquired a large ſhare in the property; but, from the original conſtitution of the Government, has no ſhare in the power. Under what pretence would any individual of that order aſſume authority in public affairs? As men are commonly much attached to their ancient government, it is not to be expected that the public would ever favour ſuch uſurpations. But where the original conſtitution allows any ſhare of power, though ſmall, to an order of men who poſſeſs a large ſhare of the property, it is eaſy for them gradually to ſtretch their authority, and bring the balance of power to coincide with that of property. This has been the caſe with the houſe of commons in ENGLAND.

Moſt writers, that have treated of the BRITISH government, have ſuppoſed, that as the lower houſe repreſents all the commons of GREAT BRITAIN, its weight

in the ſcale is proportioned to the property and power of all whom it repreſents. But this principle muſt not be received as abſolutely true: For though the people are apt to attach themſelves more to the houſe of commons than to any other member of the conſtitution, that houſe being choſen by them as their repreſentatives, and as the public guardians of their liberty; yet are there inſtances where the houſe, even when in oppoſition to the crown, has not been followed by the people; as we may particularly obſerve of the *Tory* houſe of commons in the reign of King WILLIAM. Were the members obliged to receive inſtructions from their conſtituents, like the DUTCH deputies, this would entirely alter the caſe; and if ſuch immenſe power and riches, as thoſe of all the commons of GREAT BRITAIN, were brought into the ſcale, it is not eaſy to conceive, that the crown could either influence that multitude of people, or withſtand that overbalance of property. It is true, the crown has great influence over the collective body in the elections of members: but were this influence, which at preſent is only exerted once in ſeven years, to be employed in bringing over the people to every vote, it would ſoon be waſted; and no ſkill, popularity, or revenue could ſupport it. I muſt, therefore, be of opinion, that an alteration in this particular would introduce a total alteration in our government, and would ſoon reduce it to a pure republic; and, perhaps, to a republic of no inconvenient form. For though the people, collected in a body like the ROMAN tribes, be quite unfit for government, yet, when diſperſed in ſmall bodies, they are more ſuſceptible both of reaſon and order; the force of popular currents and tides is, in a great meaſure, broken; and the public intereſt may be purſued with ſome method and conſtancy. But it is needleſs to reaſon any farther concerning a form of government which is never likely to have place in GREAT BRITAN, and which ſeems not to be the aim of any party amongſt us. Let us cheriſh and improve our ancient government as much as poſſible, without encouraging a paſſion for ſuch dangerous novelties.

ESSAY

ESSAY V.

Of the ORIGIN of GOVERNMENT.

MAN, born in a family, is compelled to maintain ſociety, from neceſſity, from natural inclination, and from habit. The ſame creature, in his farther progreſs, is engaged to eſtabliſh political ſociety, in order to adminiſter juſtice; without which there can be no peace among them, nor ſafety, nor mutual intercourſe. We are, therefore, to look upon all the vaſt apparatus of our government, as having ultimately no other object or purpoſe but the diſtribution of juſtice, or, in other words, the ſupport of the twelve judges. Kings and parliaments, fleets and armies, officers of the court and revenue, ambaſſadors, miniſters, and privy-counſellors, are all ſubordinate in their end to this part of adminiſtration. Even the clergy, as their duty leads them to inculcate morality, may juſtly be thought, ſo far as regards this world, to have no other uſeful object of their inſtitution.

All men are ſenſible of the neceſſity of juſtice to maintain peace and order; and all men are ſenſible of the neceſſity of peace and order for the maintenance of ſociety. Yet, notwithſtanding this ſtrong and obvious neceſſity, ſuch is the frailty or perverſeneſs of our nature! it is impoſſible to keep men, faithfully and unerringly, in the paths of juſtice. Some extraordinary circumſtances may happen, in which a man finds his intereſts to be more promoted by fraud or rapine, than hurt by the breach which his injuſtice makes in the ſocial union. But much more frequently he is ſeduced from his great and important, but diſtant intereſts, by the allurement of preſent, though often very frivolous, tem-

temptations. This great weakneſs is incurable in human nature.

Men muſt, therefore, endeavour to palliate what they cannot cure. They muſt inſtitute ſome perſons, under the appellation of magiſtrates, whoſe peculiar office it is, to point out the decrees of equity; to puniſh tranſgreſſors; to correct fraud and violence; and to oblige men, however reluctant, to conſult their own real and permanent intereſts. In a word, OBEDIENCE is a new duty which muſt be invented to ſupport that of JUSTICE; and the ties of equity muſt be corroborated by thoſe of allegiance.

But ſtill, viewing matters in an abſtract light, it may be thought that nothing is gained by this alliance; and that the factitious duty of obedience, from its very nature, lays as feeble a hold of the human mind as the primitive and natural duty of juſtice. Peculiar intereſts and preſent temptations may overcome the one as well as the other. They are equally expoſed to the ſame inconvenience. And the man who is inclined to be a bad neighbour, muſt be led by the ſame motives, well or ill underſtood, to be a bad citizen and ſubject. Not to mention, that the magiſtrate himſelf may often be negligent, or partial, or unjuſt in his adminiſtration.

Experience, however, proves, that there is a great difference between the caſes. Order in ſociety, we find, is much better maintained by means of government; and our duty to the magiſtrate is more ſtrictly guarded by the principles of human nature, than our duty to our fellow-citizens. The love of dominion is ſo ſtrong in the breaſt of man, that many not only ſubmit to, but court all the dangers, and fatigues, and cares of government; and men, once raiſed to that ſtation, though often led aſtray by private paſſions, find, in ordinary caſes, a viſible intereſt in the impartial adminiſtration of juſtice. The perſons who firſt attain this diſtinction by the conſent, tacit or expreſs, of the people, muſt be endowed with ſuperior perſonal qualities of valour, force, integrity, or prudence, which command reſpect and con-

confidence: and, after government is eſtabliſhed, a regard to birth, rank, and ſtation, has a mighty influence over men, and enforces the decrees of the magiſtrate. The prince or leader exclaims againſt every diſorder which diſturbs his ſociety. He ſummons all his partizans and all men of probity to aid him in correcting and redreſſing it: and he is readily followed by all indifferent perſons in the execution of his office. He ſoon acquires the power of rewarding theſe ſervices; and in the progreſs of ſociety, he eſtabliſhes ſubordinate miniſters, and often a military force, who find an immediate and a viſible intereſt, in ſupporting his authority. Habit ſoon conſolidates what other principles of human nature had imperfectly founded; and men, once accuſtomed to obedience, never think of departing from that path, in which they and their anceſtors have conſtantly trod, and to which they are confined by ſo many urgent and viſible motives.

But though this progreſs of human affairs may appear certain and inevitable, and though the ſupport which allegiance brings to juſtice be founded on obvious principles of human nature, it cannot be expected that men ſhould beforehand be able to diſcover them, or foreſee their operation. Government commences more caſually and more imperfectly. It is probable, that the firſt aſcendant of one man over multitudes begun during a ſtate of war; where the ſuperiority of courage and of genius diſcovers itſelf moſt viſibly, where unanimity and concert are moſt requiſite, and where the pernicious effects of diſorder are moſt ſenſibly felt. The long continuance of that ſtate, an incident common among ſavage tribes, enured the people to ſubmiſſion; and if the chieftain poſſeſſed as much equity as prudence and valour, he became, even during peace, the arbiter of all differences, and could gradually, by a mixture of force and conſent, eſtabliſh his authority. The benefit ſenſibly felt from his influence made it be cheriſhed by the people, at leaſt by the peaceable and well-diſpoſed among them: and if his ſon enjoyed the ſame good qualities, government advanced the ſooner to maturity and perfection; but was

ſtill

ſtill in a feeble ſtate, till the farther progreſs of improvement procured the magiſtrate a revenue, and enabled him to beſtow rewards on the ſeveral inſtruments of his adminiſtration, and to inflict puniſhments on the refractory and diſobedient. Before that period, each exertion of his influence muſt have been particular, and founded on the peculiar circumſtances of the caſe. After it, ſubmiſſion was no longer a matter of choice in the bulk of the community, but was rigorouſly exacted by the authority of the ſupreme magiſtrate.

In all governments, there is a perpetual inteſtine ſtruggle, open or ſecret, between AUTHORITY and LIBERTY; and neither of them can ever abſolutely prevail in the conteſt. A great ſacrifice of liberty muſt neceſſarily be made in every government; yet even the authority which confines liberty, can never, and perhaps ought never, in any conſtitution, to become quite entire and uncontroulable. The ſultan is maſter of the life and fortune of any individual; but will not be permitted to impoſe new taxes on his ſubjects: a French monarch can impoſe taxes at pleaſure; but would find it dangerous to attempt the lives and fortunes of individuals. Religion alſo, in moſt countries, is commonly found to be a very intractable principle; and other principles or prejudices frequently reſiſt all the authority of the civil magiſtrate; whoſe power, being founded on opinion, can never ſubvert other opinions, equally rooted with that of his title to dominion. The government which, in common appellation, receives the appellation of Free, is that which admits of a partition of power among ſeveral members, whoſe united authority is no leſs, or is commonly greater, than that of any monarch; but who, in the uſual courſe of adminiſtration, muſt act by general and equal laws, that are previouſly known to all the members and to all their ſubjects. In this ſenſe, it muſt be owned, that liberty is the perfection of civil ſociety; but ſtill authority muſt be acknowledged eſſential to its very exiſtence: and in thoſe conteſts which ſo often take place between the one and the other, the

latter may, on that account, challenge the preference. Unleſs perhaps one may ſay (and it may be ſaid with ſome reaſon) that a circumſtance, which is eſſential to the exiſtence of civil ſociety, muſt always ſupport itſelf, and needs be guarded with leſs jealouſy, than one that contributes only to its perfection, which the indolence of men is ſo apt to neglect, or their ignorance to overlook.

ESSAY VI.

Of the INDEPENDENCY of PARLIAMENT.

POLITICAL writers have eſtabliſhed it as a maxim, that, in contriving any ſyſtem of government, and fixing the ſeveral checks and controuls of the conſtitution, every man ought to be ſuppoſed a *knave*, and to have no other end, in all his actions, than private intereſt. By this intereſt we muſt govern him, and by means of it make him, notwithſtanding his inſatiable avarice and ambition, co-operate to public good. Without this, ſay they, we ſhall in vain boaſt of the advantages of any conſtitution; and ſhall find, in the end, that we have no ſecurity for our liberties or poſſeſſions, except the good-will of our rulers; that is, we ſhall have no ſecurity at all.

It is, therefore, a juſt *political* maxim, *that every man muſt be ſuppoſed a knave:* Though, at the ſame time, it appears ſomewhat ſtrange, that a maxim ſhould be true in *politics* which is falſe in *fact*. But to ſatisfy us on this head, we may conſider, that men are generally more honeſt in their private than in their public capacity, and will go greater lengths to ſerve a party than when their own private intereſt is alone concerned. Honour is a great

great check upon mankind: But where a conſiderable body of men act together, this check is in a great meaſure removed; ſince a man is ſure to be approved of by his own party for what promotes the common intereſt; and he ſoon learns to deſpiſe the clamours of adverſaries. To which we may add, that every court or ſenate is determined by the greater number of voices; ſo that, if ſelf-intereſt influences only the majority (as it will always do), the whole ſenate follows the allurements of this ſeparate intereſt, and acts as if it contained not one member who had any regard to public intereſt and liberty.

When there offers, therefore, to our cenſure and examination, any plan of government, real or imaginary, where the power is diſtributed among ſeveral courts and ſeveral orders of men, we ſhould always conſider the ſeparate intereſt of each court and each order; and if we find that, by the ſkilful diviſion of power, this intereſt muſt neceſſarily in its operation concur with public, we may pronounce that government to be wiſe and happy. If, on the contrary, ſeparate intereſt be not checked, and be not directed to the public, we ought to look for nothing but faction, diſorder, and tyranny, from ſuch a government. In this opinion I am juſtified by experience, as well as by the authority of all philoſophers and politicians, both ancient and modern.

How much, therefore, would it have ſurpriſed ſuch a genius as CICERO or TACITUS, to have been told, that in a future age, there ſhould ariſe a very regular ſyſtem of *mixed* government, where the authority was ſo diſtributed, that one rank, whenever it pleaſed, might ſwallow up all the reſt, and engroſs the whole power of the conſtitution. Such a government, they would ſay, will not be a mixed government. For ſo great is the natural ambition of men, that they are never ſatisfied with power; and if one order of men, by purſuing its own intereſt, can uſurp upon every other order, it will certainly do ſo, and render itſelf, as far as poſſible, abſolute and uncontroulable.

But,

But, in this opinion, experience ſhows they would have been miſtaken. For this is actually the caſe with the BRITISH conſtitution. The ſhare of power allotted by our conſtitution to the houſe of commons is ſo great, that it abſolutely commands all the other parts of the government. The king's legiſlative power is plainly no proper check to it. For though the king has a negative in framing laws, yet this, in fact, is eſteemed of ſo little moment, that whatever is voted by the two houſes is always ſure to paſs into a law, and the royal aſſent is little better than a form. The principal weight of the crown lies in the executive power. But beſides that the executive power in every government is altogether ſubordinate to the legiſlative; beſides this, I ſay, the exerciſe of this power requires an immenſe expence; and the commons have aſſumed to themſelves the ſole right of granting money. How eaſy, therefore, would it be for that houſe to wreſt from the crown all theſe powers, one after another; by making every grant conditional, and chooſing their time ſo well, that their refuſal of ſupply ſhould only diſtreſs the government, without giving foreign powers any advantage over us? Did the houſe of commons depend in the ſame manner on the king, and had none of the members any property but from his gift, would not he command all their reſolutions, and be from that moment abſolute? As to the houſe of lords, they are a very powerful ſupport to the crown, ſo long as they are, in their turn, ſupported by it; but both experience and reaſon ſhow, that they have no force or authority ſufficient to maintain themſelves alone without ſuch ſupport.

How, therefore, ſhall we reſolve this paradox? And by what means is this member of our conſtitution confined within the proper limits; ſince, from our very conſtitution, it muſt neceſſarily have as much power as it demands, and can only be confined by itſelf? How is this conſiſtent with our experience of human nature? I anſwer, that the intereſt of the body is here reſtrained by that of the individuals; and that the houſe of commons

mons ſtretches not its power, becauſe ſuch an uſurpation would be contrary to the intereſt of the majority of its members. The crown has ſo many offices at its diſpoſal, that, when aſſiſted by the honeſt and diſintereſted part of the houſe, it will always command the reſolutions of the whole, ſo far, at leaſt, as to preſerve the ancient conſtitution from danger. We may, therefore, give to this influence what name we pleaſe; we may call it by the invidious appellations of *corruption* and *dependence;* but ſome degree and ſome kind of it are inſeparable from the very nature of the conſtitution, and neceſſary to the preſervation of our mixed government.

Inſtead then of aſſerting * abſolutely, that the dependence of parliament, in every degree, is an infringement of BRITISH liberty, the country-party ſhould have made ſome conceſſions to their adverſaries, and have only examined what was the proper degree of this dependence, beyond which it became dangerous to liberty. But ſuch a moderation is not to be expected in party-men of any kind. After a conceſſion of this nature, all declamation muſt be abandoned; and a calm inquiry into the proper degree of court-influence and parliamentary dependence would have been expected by the readers. And though the advantage, in ſuch a controverſy, might poſſibly remain to the *country party*, yet the victory would not be ſo complete as they wiſh for; nor would a true patriot have given an entire looſe to his zeal, for fear of running matters into a contrary extreme, by diminiſhing too † far the influence of the crown. It was, therefore, thought beſt to deny, that this extreme could ever be dangerous to the conſtitution, or that the crown could ever have too little influence over the members of parliament.

All queſtions concerning the proper medium between extremes are difficult to be decided; both becauſe it is not eaſy to find *words* proper to fix this medium, and becauſe the good and ill, in ſuch caſes, run ſo gradually into

* See *Diſſertation on Parties*, throughout.

† See NOTE [B].

into each other, as even to render our *sentiments* doubtful and uncertain. But there is a peculiar difficulty in the present case, which would embarrass the most knowing and most impartial examiner. The power of the crown is always lodged in a single person, either king or minister; and as this person may have either a greater or less degree of ambition, capacity, courage, popularity, or fortune, the power, which is too great in one hand, may become too little in another. In pure republics, where the authority is distributed among several assemblies or senates, the checks and controls are more regular in their operation; because the members of such numerous assemblies may be presumed to be always nearly equal in capacity and virtue; and it is only their number, riches, or authority, which enter into consideration. But a limited monarchy admits not of any such stability; nor is it possible to assign to the crown such a determinate degree of power, as will, in every hand, form a proper counterbalance to the other parts of the constitution. This is an unavoidable disadvantage, among the many advantages, attending that species of government.

ESSAY VII.

Whether the BRITISH GOVERNMENT inclines more to ABSOLUTE MONARCHY, or to a REPUBLIC?

IT affords a violent prejudice against almost every science, that no prudent man, however sure of his principles, dares prophecy concerning any event, or foretel the remote consequences of things. A physician will not venture to pronounce concerning the condition of

his patient for a fortnight or a month after: And ſtill leſs dares a politician foretel the ſituation of public affairs a few years hence. HARRINGTON thought himſelf ſo ſure of his general principle, *that the balance of power depends on that of property*, that he ventured to pronounce it impoſſible ever to re-eſtabliſh monarchy in ENGLAND: But his book was ſcarcely publiſhed when the king was reſtored; and we ſee, that monarchy has ever ſince ſubſiſted upon the ſame footing as before. Notwithſtanding this unlucky example, I will venture to examine an important queſtion, to wit, *Whether the* BRITISH *government inclines more to abſolute monarchy, or to a republic; and in which of theſe two ſpecies of government it will moſt probably terminate?* As there ſeems not to be any great danger of a ſudden revolution either way, I ſhall at leaſt eſcape the ſhame attending my temerity, if I ſhould be found to have been miſtaken.

Thoſe who aſſert, That the balance of our government inclines towards abſolute monarchy, may ſupport their opinion by the following reaſons: That property has a great influence on power, cannot poſſibly be denied; but yet the general maxim, *that the balance of one depends on the balance of the other*, muſt be received with ſeveral limitations. It is evident, that much leſs property in a ſingle hand will be able to counterbalance a greater property in ſeveral; not only becauſe it is difficult to make many perſons combine in the ſame views and meaſures, but becauſe property, when united, cauſes much greater dependence than the ſame property when diſperſed. A hundred perſons, of 1000 *l.* a-year a-piece, can conſume all their income, and nobody ſhall ever be the better for them, except their ſervants and tradeſmen, who juſtly regard their profits as the product of their own labour. But a man poſſeſſed of 100,000 *l.* a-year, if he has either any generoſity, or any cunning, may create a great dependence by obligations, and ſtill a greater by expectations. Hence we may obſerve, that, in all free governments, any ſubject exorbitantly rich, has always created jealouſy, even though his riches bore no proportion

tion to thoſe of the ſtate. CRASSUS's fortune, if I remember well, amounted only to about two millions and a half of our money; yet we find, that though his genius was nothing extraordinary, he was able, by means of his riches alone, to counterbalance, during his lifetime, the power of POMPEY as well as that of CÆSAR, who afterwards became maſter of the world. The wealth of the MEDICI made them maſters of FLORENCE; though, it is probable, it was not conſiderable, compared to the united property of that opulent republic.

Theſe conſiderations are apt to make one entertain a magnificent idea of the BRITISH ſpirit and love of liberty; ſince we could maintain our free government, during ſo many centuries, againſt our ſovereigns, who, beſides the power and dignity and majeſty of the crown, have always been poſſeſſed of much more property than any ſubject has ever enjoyed in any commonwealth. But it may be ſaid, that this ſpirit, however great, will never be able to ſupport itſelf againſt that immenſe property which is now lodged in the king, and which is ſtill increaſing. Upon a moderate computation, there are near three millions a-year at the diſpoſal of the crown. The civil liſt amounts to near a million; the collection of all taxes to another; and the employments in the army and navy, together with eccleſiaſtical preferments, to above a third million: An enormous ſum, and what may fairly be computed to be more than a thirtieth part of the whole income and labour of the kingdom. When we add to this great property, the increaſing luxury of the nation, our proneneſs to corruption, together with the great power and prerogatives of the crown, and the command of military force, there is no one but muſt deſpair of being able, without extraordinary efforts, to ſupport our free government much longer under theſe diſadvantages.

On the other hand, thoſe who maintain, That the bias of the BRITISH government leans towards a republic, may ſupport their opinion by ſpecious arguments. It

may be said, that though this immense property in the crown be joined to the dignity of first magistrate, and to many other legal powers and prerogatives, which should naturally give it greater influence; yet it really becomes less dangerous to liberty upon that very account. Were ENGLAND a republic, and were any private man possessed of a revenue, a third, or even a tenth part as large as that of the crown, he would very justly excite jealousy; because he would infallibly have great authority in the government. And such an irregular authority, not avowed by the laws, is always more dangerous than a much greater authority derived from them. A man, possessed of usurped power, can set no bounds to his pretensions: His partizans have liberty to hope for every thing in his favour: His enemies provoke his ambition, with his fears, by the violence of their opposition: And the government being thrown into a ferment, every corrupted humour in the state naturally gathers to him. On the contrary, a legal authority, though great, has always some bounds, which terminate both the hopes and pretensions of the person possessed of it: The laws must have provided a remedy against its excesses: Such an eminent magistrate has much to fear, and little to hope, from his usurpations: And as his legal authority is quietly submitted to, he has small temptation and small opportunity of extending it farther. Besides, it happens, with regard to ambitious aims and projects, what may be observed with regard to sects of philosophy and religion. A new sect excites such a ferment, and is both opposed and defended with such vehemence, that it always spreads faster, and multiplies its partizans with greater rapidity, than any old established opinion, recommended by the sanction of the laws and of antiquity. Such is the nature of novelty, that, where any thing pleases, it becomes doubly agreeable, if new; but if it displeases, it is doubly displeasing upon that very account. And, in most cases, the violence of enemies is favourable to ambitious projects, as well as the zeal of partizans.

It

It may farther be ſaid, that though men be much governed by intereſt; yet even intereſt itſelf, and all human affairs, are entirely governed by *opinion*. Now, there has been a ſudden and ſenſible change in the opinions of men within theſe laſt fifty years, by the progreſs of learning and of liberty. Moſt people, in this iſland, have diveſted themſelves of all ſuperſtitious reverence to names and authority: The clergy have much loſt their credit: Their pretenſions and doctrines have been ridiculed; and even religion can ſcarcely ſupport itſelf in the world. The mere name of *king* commands little reſpect; and to talk of a king as GOD's vicegerent on earth, or to give him any of thoſe magnificent titles which formerly dazzled mankind, would but excite laughter in every one. Though the crown, by means of its large revenue, may maintain its authority in times of tranquillity upon private intereſt and influence; yet, as the leaſt ſhock or convulſion muſt break all theſe intereſts to pieces, the royal power, being no longer ſupported by the ſettled principles and opinions of men, will immediately diſſolve. Had men been in the ſame diſpoſition at the *Revolution* as they are at preſent, monarchy would have run a great riſk of being entirely loſt in this iſland.

Durſt I venture to deliver my own ſentiments amidſt theſe oppoſite arguments, I would aſſert, that unleſs there happen ſome extraordinary convulſion, the power of the crown, by means of its large revenue, is rather upon the increaſe; though, at the ſame time, I own, that its progreſs ſeems very ſlow, and almoſt inſenſible. The tide has run long, and with ſome rapidity, to the ſide of popular government, and is juſt beginning to turn towards monarchy.

It is well known that every government muſt come to a period; and that death is unavoidable to the political as well as to the animal body. But, as one kind of death may be preferable to another, it may be inquired, Whether it be more deſirable for the BRITISH conſtitution to terminate in a popular government, or in abſolute monarchy? Here I would frankly declare, that, though liberty be preferable to ſlavery, in almoſt every caſe; yet

I ſhould rather wiſh to ſee an abſolute monarch than a republic in this iſland. For, let us conſider, what kind of republic we have reaſon to expect? The queſtion is not concerning any fine imaginary republic, of which a man may form a plan in his cloſet. There is no doubt but a popular government may be imagined more perfect than abſolute monarchy, or even than our preſent conſtitution: But what reaſon have we to expect that any ſuch government will ever be eſtabliſhed in GREAT BRITAIN, upon the diſſolution of our monarchy? If any ſingle perſon acquire power enough to take our conſtitution to pieces, and put it up a-new, he is really an abſolute monarch; and we have already had an inſtance of this kind, ſufficient to convince us, that ſuch a perſon will never reſign his power, or eſtabliſh any free government. Matters, therefore, muſt be truſted to their natural progreſs and operation; and the houſe of commons, according to its preſent conſtitution, muſt be the only legiſlature in ſuch a popular government. The inconveniences attending ſuch a ſituation of affairs preſent themſelves by thouſands. If the houſe of commons, in ſuch a caſe, ever diſſolve itſelf, which is not to be expected, we may look for a civil war every election. If it continue itſelf, we ſhall ſuffer all the tyranny of a faction ſubdivided into new factions. And as ſuch a violent government cannot long ſubſiſt, we ſhall, at laſt, after many convulſions and civil wars, find repoſe in abſolute monarchy, which it would have been happier for us to have eſtabliſhed peaceably from the beginning. Abſolute monarchy, therefore, is the eaſieſt death, the true *Euthanaſia* of the BRITISH conſtitution.

Thus, if we have reaſon to be more jealous of monarchy, becauſe the danger is more imminent from that quarter; we have alſo reaſon to be more jealous of popular government, becauſe that danger is more terrible. This may teach us a leſſon of moderation in all our political controverſies.

ESSAY

ESSAY VIII.

Of Parties in General.

OF all men that distinguish themselves by memorable atchievements, the first place of honour seems due to LEGISLATORS and founders of states, who transmit a system of laws and institutions to secure the peace, happiness, and liberty of future generations. The influence of useful inventions in the arts and sciences may perhaps extend farther than that of wise laws, whose effects are limited both in time and place; but the benefit arising from the former is not so sensible as that which results from the latter. Speculative sciences do indeed improve the mind; but this advantage reaches only to a few persons who have leisure to apply themselves to them. And as to practical arts, which increase the commodities and enjoyments of life, it is well known, that mens happiness consists not so much in an abundance of these, as in the peace and security with which they possess them; and those blessings can only be derived from good government. Not to mention, that general virtue and good morals in a state, which are so requisite to happiness, can never arise from the most refined precepts of philosophy, or even the severest injunctions of religion; but must proceed entirely from the virtuous education of youth, the effect of wise laws and institutions. I must therefore presume to differ from LORD BACON in this particular; and must regard antiquity as somewhat unjust in its distribution of honours, when it made gods of all the inventors of useful arts, such as CERES, BACCHUS, ÆSCULAPIUS; and dignify legislators, such as ROMULUS and THESEUS, only with the appellation of demigods and heroes.

As much as legislators and founders of states ought

to be honoured and reſpected among men, as much ought the founders of ſects and factions to be deteſted and hated; becauſe the influence of faction is directly contrary to that of laws. Factions ſubvert government, render laws impotent, and beget the fierceſt animoſities among men of the ſame nation, who ought to give mutual aſſiſtance and protection to each other. And what ſhould render the founders of parties more odious, is the difficulty of extirpating theſe weeds, when once they have taken root in any ſtate. They naturally propagate themſelves for many centuries, and ſeldom end but by the total diſſolution of that government in which they are ſown. They are, beſides, plants which grow moſt plentifully in the richeſt ſoil; and though abſolute governments be not wholly free from them, it muſt be confeſſed, that they riſe more eaſily, and propagate themſelves faſter in free governments, where they always infect the legiſlature itſelf, which alone could be able, by the ſteady application of rewards and puniſhments, to eradicate them.

Factions may be divided into PERSONAL and REAL; that is, into factions founded on perſonal friendſhip or animoſity among ſuch as compoſe the contending parties, and into thoſe founded on ſome real difference of ſentiment or intereſt. The reaſon of this diſtinction is obvious; though I muſt acknowledge, that parties are ſeldom found pure and unmixed, either of the one kind or the other. It is not often ſeen, that a government divides into factions, where there is no difference in the views of the conſtituent members, either real or apparent, trivial or material; and in thoſe factions which are founded on the moſt real and moſt material difference, there is always obſerved a great deal of perſonal animoſity or affection. But notwithſtanding this mixture, a party may be denominated either perſonal or real, according to that principle which is predominant, and is found to have the greateſt influence.

Perſonal factions ariſe moſt eaſily in ſmall republics. Every domeſtic quarrel there becomes an affair of ſtate.

Love,

Love, vanity, emulation, any paſſion, as well as ambition and reſentment, begets public diviſion. The Neri and Bianchi of Florence, the Fregosi and Adorni of Genoa, the Colonesi and Orsini of modern Rome, were parties of this kind.

Men have ſuch a propenſity to divide into perſonal factions, that the ſmalleſt appearance of real difference will produce them. What can be imagined more trivial than the difference between one colour of livery and another in horſe-races? Yet this difference begat two moſt inveterate factions in the Greek empire, the Prasini and Veneti, who never ſuſpended their animoſities till they ruined that unhappy government.

We find in the Roman hiſtory a remarkable diſſenſion between two tribes, the Pollia and Papiria, which continued for the ſpace of near three hundred years, and diſcovered itſelf in their ſuffrages at every election of magiſtrates *. This faction was the more remarkable, as it could continue for ſo long a tract of time; even though it did not ſpread itſelf, nor draw any of the other tribes into a ſhare of the quarrel. If mankind had not a ſtrong propenſity to ſuch diviſions, the indifference of the reſt of the community muſt have ſuppreſſed this fooliſh animoſity, that had not any aliment of new benefits and injuries, of general ſympathy and antipathy, which never fail to take place when the whole ſtate is rent into two equal factions.

Nothing is more uſual than to ſee parties, which have begun upon a real difference, continue even after that dif-

* As this fact has not been much obſerved by antiquaries or politicians, I ſhall deliver it in the words of the Roman hiſtorian. *Populus* Tusculanus *cum conjugibus ac liberis* Romam *venit: Ea multitudo, veſte mutata, & ſpecie reorum, tribus circuit, genibus ſe omnium advolvens. Plus itaque miſericordia ad pœnæ veniam impetrandam, quam cauſa ad crimen purgandum, valuit. Tribus omnes, præter* Pollia, *antiquârunt legem.* Pollia *ſententia fuit, puberes verberatos necari; liberos conjugeſque ſub corona lege belli venire: Memoriamque ejus iræ* Tusculanis *in pœnæ tam atrocis auctores manſiſſe ad patrum ætatem conſtat; nec quemquam ferme ex* Pollia *tribu candidatum* Papiriam *ferre ſolitum,* T. Livii, lib. 8. The Castelani and Nicolloti are two mobbiſh factions in Venice, who frequently box together, and then lay aſide their quarrels preſently.

difference is loſt. When men are once enliſted on oppoſide ſides, they contract an affection to the perſons with whom they are united, and an animoſity againſt their antagoniſts; and theſe paſſions they often tranſmit to their poſterity. The real difference between GUELF and GHIBBELINE was long loſt in ITALY before theſe factions were extinguiſhed. The GUELFS adhered to the Pope, the GHIBBELINES to the emperor; yet the family of SFORZA, who were in alliance with the emperor, though they were GUELFS, being expelled MILAN by the king * of FRANCE, aſſiſted by JACOMO TRIVULZIO and the GHIBBELINES, the Pope concurred with the latter; and they formed leagues with the Pope againſt the Emperor.

The civil wars which aroſe ſome few years ago in MOROCCO between the *blacks* and *whites*, merely on account of their complexion, are founded on a pleaſant difference. We laugh at them; but I believe, were things rightly examined, we afford much more occaſion of ridicule to the MOORS. For what are all the wars of religion which have prevailed in this polite and knowing part of the world? They are certainly more abſurd than the MOORISH civil wars. The difference of complexion is a ſenſible and a real difference: But the controverſy about an article of faith, which is utterly abſurd and unintelligible, is not a difference in ſentiment, but in a few phraſes and expreſſions; which one party accepts of without underſtanding them, and the other refuſes in the ſame manner.

Real factions may be divided into thoſe from *intereſt*, from *principle*, and from *affection*. Of all factions, the firſt are the moſt reaſonable and the moſt excuſable. Where two orders of men, ſuch as the nobles and people, have a diſtinct authority in a government not very accurately balanced and modelled, they naturally follow a diſtinct intereſt; nor can we reaſonably expect a different conduct, conſidering that degree of ſelfiſhneſs implanted in human nature. It requires great ſkill in a legiſlator

* Lewis XII.

giſlator to prevent ſuch parties; and many philoſophers are of opinion, that this ſecret, like the *grand elixir* or *perpetual motion*, may amuſe men in theory, but can never poſſibly be reduced to practice. In deſpotic governments indeed, factions do not often appear; but they are not the leſs real, or rather they are more real and more pernicious upon that very account. The diſtinct orders of men, nobles and people, ſoldiers and merchants, have all a diſtinct intereſt; but the more powerful oppreſſes the weaker with impunity and without reſiſtance, which begets a ſeeming tranquillity in ſuch governments.

There has been an attempt in England to divide the *landed* and *trading* part of the nation, but without ſucceſs. The intereſts of theſe two bodies are not really diſtinct, and never will be ſo, till our public debts increaſe to ſuch a degree as to become altogether oppreſſive and intolerable.

Parties from *principle*, eſpecially abſtract ſpeculative principle, are known only to modern times, and are perhaps the moſt extraordinary and unaccountable *phenomenon* that has yet appeared in human affairs. Where different principles beget a contrariety of conduct, which is the caſe with all different political principles, the matter may be more eaſily explained. A man who eſteems the true right of government to lie in one man or one family, cannot eaſily agree with his fellow-citizen who thinks that another man or family is poſſeſſed of this right. Each naturally wiſhes that right may take place, according to his own notions of it. But where the difference of principle is attended with no contrariety of action, but every one may follow his own way without interfering with his neighbour, as happens in all religious controverſies; what madneſs, what fury, can beget ſuch unhappy and ſuch fatal diviſions!

Two men travelling on the highway, the one eaſt, the other weſt, can eaſily paſs each other if the way be broad enough: but two men, reaſoning upon oppoſite principles of religion, cannot ſo eaſily paſs without ſhocking; though one ſhould think that the way were alſo, in

that caſe, ſufficiently broad, and that each might proceed without interruption in his own courſe. But ſuch is the nature of the human mind, that it always lays hold on every mind that approaches it; and as it is wonderfully fortified by an unanimity of ſentiments, ſo is it ſhocked and diſturbed by any contrariety. Hence the eagerneſs which moſt people diſcover in a diſpute; and hence their impatience of oppoſition, even in the moſt ſpeculative and indifferent opinions.

This principle, however frivolous it may appear, ſeems to have been the origin of all religious wars and diviſions But as this principle is univerſal in human nature, its effects would not have been confined to one age and to one ſect of religion, did it not there concur with other more accidental cauſes, which raiſe it to ſuch a height, as to produce the greateſt miſery and devaſtation. Moſt religions of the ancient world aroſe in the unknown ages of government, when men were as yet barbarous and uninſtructed, and the prince, as well as peaſant, was diſpoſed to receive, with implicit faith, every pious tale or fiction which was offered him. The magiſtrate embraced the religion of the people, and entering cordially into the care of ſacred matters, naturally acquired an authority in them, and united the eccleſiaſtical with the civil power. But the *Chriſtian* religion ariſing, while principles directly oppoſite to it were firmly eſtabliſhed in the polite part of the world, who deſpiſed the nation that firſt broached this novelty; no wonder that, in ſuch circumſtances, it was but little countenanced by the civil magiſtrate, and that the prieſthood was allowed to engroſs all the authority in the new ſect. So bad a uſe did they make of this power, even in thoſe early times, that the primitive perſecutions may, perhaps *in part* *, be aſcribed to the violence inſtilled by them into their followers. And the ſame principles of prieſtly government continuing, after Chriſtianity became the eſtabliſhed religion, they have engendered a ſpirit of perſecution, which has ever ſince been the poiſon of hu-

* See NOTE [C].

man ſociety, and the ſource of the moſt inveterate factions in every government. Such diviſions, therefore, on the part of the people, may juſtly be eſteemed factions of *principle*; but, on the part of the prieſts, who are the prime movers, they are really factions of *intereſt*.

There is another cauſe (beſides the authority of the prieſts, and the ſeparation of the eccleſiaſtical and civil powers) which has contributed to render CHRISTENDOM the ſcene of religious wars and diviſions. Religions, that ariſe in ages totally ignorant and barbarous, conſiſt moſtly of traditional tales and fictions, which may be different in every ſect, without being contrary to each other; and even when they are contrary, every one adheres to the tradition of his own ſect, without much reaſoning or diſputation. But as philoſophy was widely ſpread over the world at the time when Chriſtianity aroſe, the teachers of the new ſect were obliged to form a ſyſtem of ſpeculative opinions; to divide, with ſome accuracy, their articles of faith; and to explain, comment, confute, and defend, with all the ſubtilty of argument and ſcience. Hence naturally aroſe keenneſs in diſpute, when the Chriſtian religion came to be ſplit into new diviſions and hereſies: And this keenneſs aſſiſted the prieſts in their policy, of begetting a mutual hatred and antipathy among their deluded followers. Sects of philoſophy, in the ancient world, were more zealous than parties of religion; but in modern times, parties of religion are more furious and enraged than the moſt cruel factions that ever aroſe from intereſt and ambition.

I have mentioned parties from *affection* as a kind of *real* parties, beſide thoſe from *intereſt* and *principle*. By parties from affection, I underſtand thoſe which are founded on the different attachments of men towards particular families and perſons, whom they deſire to rule over them. Theſe factions are often very violent; though, I muſt own, it may ſeem unaccountable, that men ſhould attach themſelves ſo ſtrongly to perſons with whom they are no wiſe acquainted, whom perhaps they never ſaw, and from whom they never received, nor can ever hope for,

for, any favour. Yet this we often find to be the case, and even with men who, on other occasions, discover no great generosity of spirit, nor are found to be easily transported by friendship beyond their own interest. We are apt to think the relation between us and our sovereign very close and intimate. The splendour of majesty and power bestows an importance on the fortunes even of a single person: And when a man's good-nature does not give him this imaginary interest, his ill-nature will, from spite and opposition to persons whose sentiments are different from his own.

ESSAY IX.

Of the PARTIES of GREAT BRITAIN.

WERE the BRITISH government proposed as a subject of speculation, one would immediately perceive in it a source of division and party, which it would be almost impossible for it, under any administration, to avoid. The just balance between the republican and monarchical part of our constitution is really, in itself, so extremely delicate and uncertain, that, when joined to mens passions and prejudices, it is impossible but different opinions must arise concerning it, even among persons of the best understanding. Those of mild tempers, who love peace and order, and detest sedition and civil wars, will always entertain more favourable sentiments of monarchy, than men of bold and generous spirits, who are passionate lovers of liberty, and think no evil comparable to subjection and slavery. And though all reasonable men agree in general to preserve our mixed government; yet, when they come to particulars, some will incline to trust greater powers to the crown, to bestow

on

on it more influence, and to guard againſt its encroachments with leſs caution, than others who are terrified at the moſt diſtant approaches of tyranny and deſpotic power. Thus are there parties of PRINCIPLE involved in the very nature of our conſtitution, which may properly enough be denominated thoſe of COURT and COUNTRY. The ſtrength and violence of each of theſe parties will much depend upon the particular adminiſtration. An adminiſtration may be ſo bad as to throw a great majority into the oppoſition, as a good adminiſtration will reconcile to the court many of the moſt paſſionate lovers of liberty. But however the nation may fluctuate between them, the parties themſelves will always ſubſiſt, ſo long as we are governed by a limited monarchy.

But, beſides this difference of *Principle*, thoſe parties are very much fomented by a difference of INTEREST, without which they could ſcarcely ever be dangerous or violent. The crown will naturally beſtow all truſt and power upon thoſe whoſe principles, real or pretended, are moſt favourable to monarchical government; and this temptation will naturally engage them to go greater lengths than their principles would otherwiſe carry them. Their antagoniſts, who are diſappointed in their ambitious aims, throw themſelves into the party whoſe ſentiments incline them to be moſt jealous of royal power, and naturally carry thoſe ſentiments to a greater height than ſound politics will juſtify. Thus *Court* and *Country*, which are the genuine offſpring of the BRITISH government, are a kind of mixed parties, and are influenced both by principle and by intereſt. The heads of the factions are commonly moſt governed by the latter motive; the inferior members of them by the former.

As to eccleſiaſtical parties, we may obſerve, that, in all ages of the world, prieſts have been enemies to liberty; and it is certain, that this ſteady conduct of theirs muſt have been founded on fixed reaſons of intereſt and ambition. Liberty of thinking and of expreſſing our thoughts, is always fatal to prieſtly power, and to thoſe pious frauds on which it is commonly founded; and

and, by an infallible connection, which prevails among all kinds of liberty, this privilege can never be enjoyed, at leaſt has never yet been enjoyed, but in a free government. Hence it muſt happen, in ſuch a conſtitution as that of GREAT BRITAIN, that the eſtabliſhed clergy, while things are in their natural ſituation, will always be of the *Court*-party; as, on the contrary, diſſenters of all kinds will be of the *Country*-party; ſince they can never hope for that toleration which they ſtand in need of, but by means of our free government. All princes that have aimed at deſpotic power, have known of what importance it was to gain the eſtabliſhed clergy: As the clergy, on their part, have ſhown a great facility in entering into the views of ſuch princes *. GUSTAVUS VAZA was, perhaps, the only ambitious monarch that ever depreſſed the church, at the ſame time that he diſcouraged liberty. But the exorbitant power of the biſhops in SWEDEN, who, at that time, overtopped the crown itſelf, together with their attachment to a foreign family, was the reaſon of his embracing ſuch an unuſual ſyſtem of politics.

This obſervation, concerning the propenſity of prieſts to the government of a ſingle perſon, is not true with regard to one ſect only. The *Preſbyterian* and *Calviniſtic* clergy in HOLLAND were profeſſed friends to the family of ORANGE; as the *Arminians*, who were eſteemed heretics, were of the LOUVESTEIN faction, and zealous for liberty. But if a prince have the choice of both, it is eaſy to ſee, that he will prefer the epiſcopal to the preſbyterian form of government; both becauſe of the greater affinity between monarchy and epiſcopacy, and becauſe of the facility, which he will find, in ſuch a government, of ruling the clergy, by means of their eccleſiaſtical ſuperiors †.

If

* Judæi ſibi ipſi reges impoſuere; qui mobilitate vulgi expulſi, reſumpta, per arma dominatione; fugas civium, urbium everſionis, fratrum, conjugum, parentum neces, aliaque ſolita regibus auſi, ſuperſtitionem fovebant; quia honor ſacerdotii firmamentum potentiæ aſſumebatur. TACIT. *hiſt. lib.* v.

† Populi imperium juxta libertatem: paucorum dominatio regiæ libidini proprior eſt. TACIT. *Ann. lib.* vi.

If we consider the first rise of parties in ENGLAND, during the great rebellion, we shall observe, that it was conformable to this general theory, and that the species of government gave birth to them, by a regular and infallible operation. The ENGLISH constitution, before that period, had lain in a kind of confusion; yet so as that the subjects possessed many noble priviliges, which, though not exactly bounded and secured by law, were universally deemed, from long possession, to belong to them as their birth-right. An ambitious, or rather a misguided, prince arose, who deemed all these privileges to be concessions of his predecessors, revocable at pleasure; and, in prosecution of this principal, he openly acted in violation of liberty during the course of several years. Necessity at last constrained him to call a parliament: The spirit of liberty arose and spread itself: The prince being without any support, was obliged to grant every thing required of him: And his enemies, jealous and implacable, set no bounds to their pretensions. Here then began those contests, in which it was no wonder that men of that age were divided into different parties; since, even at this day, the impartial are at a loss to decide concerning the justice of the quarrel. The pretensions of the parliament, if yielded to, broke the balance of the constitution, by rendering the government almost entirely republican. If not yielded to, the nation was, perhaps, still in danger of absolute power, from the settled principles and inveterate habits of the king, which had plainly appeared in every concession that he had been constrained to make to his people. In this question, so delicate and uncertain, men naturally fell to the side which was most conformable to their usual principles; and the more passionate favourers of monarchy declared for the king, as the zealous friends of liberty sided with the parliament. The hopes of success being nearly equal on both sides, *interest* had no general influence in this contest: So that ROUND-HEAD and CAVALIER were merely parties of principle; neither of which disowned either monarchy or liberty; but the former party inclined

moſt to the republican part of our government, the latter to the monarchical. In this reſpect, they may be conſidered as court and country-party, enflamed into a civil war, by an unhappy concurrence of circumſtances, and by the turbulent ſpirit of the age. The commonwealth's men, and the partizans of abſolute power, lay concealed in both parties, and formed but an inconſiderable part of them.

The clergy had concurred with the king's arbitrary deſigns; and, in return, were allowed to perſecute their adverſaries, whom they called heretics and ſchiſmatics. The eſtabliſhed clergy were epiſcopal; the non-conformiſts preſbyterian: So that all things concurred to throw the former, without reſerve, into the king's party; and the latter into that of the parliament.

Every one knows the event of this quarrel; fatal to the king firſt, to the parliament afterwards. After many conſuſions and revolutions, the royal family was at laſt reſtored, and the ancient government re-eſtabliſhed. CHARLES II. was not made wiſer by the example of his father; but proſecuted the ſame meaſures, though, at firſt, with more ſecrecy and caution. New parties aroſe, under the appellation of *Whig* and *Tory*, which have continued ever ſince to confound and diſtract our government. To determine the nature of theſe parties is, perhaps, one of the moſt difficult problems that can be met with, and is a proof that hiſtory may contain queſtions, as uncertain as any to be found in the moſt abſtract ſciences. We have ſeen the conduct of the two parties, during the courſe of ſeventy years, in a vaſt variety of circumſtances, poſſeſſed of power, and deprived of it, during peace and during war: Perſons, who profeſs themſelves of one ſide or other, we meet with every hour, in company, in our pleaſures, in our ſerious occupations: We ourſelves are conſtrained, in a manner, to take party; and living in a country of the higheſt liberty, every one may openly declare all his ſentiments and opinions: Yet are we at a loſs to tell the nature, pretenſions, and principles of the different factions.

When

When we compare the parties of WHIG and TORY with thoſe of ROUND-HEAD and CAVALIER, the moſt obvious difference that appears between them, conſiſts in the principles of *paſſive obedience* and *indefeaſible right;* which were but little heard of among the CAVALIERS, but became the univerſal doctrine, and were eſteemed the true characteriſtic, of a TORY. Were theſe principles puſhed into their moſt obvious conſequences, they imply a formal renunciation of all our liberties, and an avowal of abſolute monarchy; ſince nothing can be a greater abſurdity than a limited power, which muſt not be reſiſted, even when it exceeds its limitations. But as the moſt rational principles are often but a weak counterpoiſe to paſſion, it is no wonder that theſe abſurd principles were found too weak for that effect. The TORIES, as men, were enemies to oppreſſion; and alſo as ENGLISHMEN, they were enemies to arbitrary power. Their zeal for liberty was, perhaps, leſs fervent than that of their antagoniſts; but was ſufficient to make them forget all their general principles, when they ſaw themſelves openly threatened with a ſubverſion of the ancient government, From theſe ſentiments aroſe the *Revolution*; an event of mighty conſequence, and the firmeſt foundation of BRITISH liberty. The conduct of the TORIES, during that event, and after it, will afford us a true inſight into the nature of that party.

In the *firſt* place, they appear to have had the genuine ſentiments of BRITONS in their affection for liberty, and in their determined reſolution not to ſacrifice it to any abſtract principle whatſoever, or to any imaginary rights of princes. This part of their character might juſtly have been doubted of before the *Revolution*, from the obvious tendency of their avowed principles, and from their compliances with a court, which ſeemed to make little ſecret of its arbitrary deſigns. The *Revolution* ſhowed them to have been, in this reſpect, nothing but a genuine *court party*, ſuch as might be expected in a BRITISH government: That is, *Lovers of liberty, but greater lovers of monarchy.* It muſt, however, be confeſſed,

that they carried their monarchical principles farther, even in practice, but more so in theory, than was, in any degree, consistent with a limited government.

Secondly, Neither their principles nor affections concurred, entirely or heartily, with the settlement made at the *Revolution*, or with that which has since taken place. This part of their character may seem opposite to the former; since any other settlement, in those circumstances of the nation, must probably have been dangerous, if not fatal to liberty. But the heart of man is made to reconcile contradictions; and this contradiction is not greater than that between *passive obedience* and the *resistance* employed at the *Revolution*. A TORY, therefore, since the *Revolution*, may be defined in a few words, to be *a lover of monarchy, though without abandoning liberty; and a partizan of the family of* STUART: As a WHIG may be defined to be *a lover of liberty, though without renouncing monarchy; and a friend to the settlement in the* PROTESTANT *line*.

These different views, with regard to the settlement of the crown, were accidental, but natural additions to the principles of the *court* and *country* parties, which are the genuine divisions in the BRITISH government. A passionate lover of monarchy is apt to be displeased at any change of the succession, as favouring too much of a commonwealth: A passionate lover of liberty is apt to think that every part of the government ought to be subordinate to the interests of liberty.

Some, who will not venture to assert, that the *real* difference between WHIG and TORY was lost at the *Revolution*, seem inclined to think, that the difference is now abolished, and that affairs are so far returned to their natural state, that there are at present no other parties among us but *court* and *country*; that is, men who, by interest or principle, are attached either to monarchy or liberty. The TORIES have been so long obliged to talk in the republican style, that they seem to have made converts of themselves by their hypocrisy, and to have embraced the sentiments, as well as language, of their

their adverſaries. There are, however, very conſiderable remains of that party in ENGLAND, with all their old prejudices; and a proof that *court* and *country* are not our only parties, is, that almoſt all the diſſenters ſide with the court, and the lower clergy, at leaſt of the church of ENGLAND, with the oppoſition. This may convince us, that ſome bias ſtill hangs upon our conſtitution, ſome extrinſic weight, which turns it from its natural courſe, and cauſes a confuſion in our parties *.

ESSAY X.

Of SUPERSTITION and ENTHUSIASM.

THAT the corruption of the beſt things produces the worſt, is grown into a maxim, and is commonly proved, among other inſtances, by the pernicious effects of *ſuperſtition* and *enthuſiaſm*, the corruptions of true religion.

Theſe two ſpecies of falſe religion, though both pernicious, are yet of a very different, and even of a contrary nature. The mind of man is ſubject to certain unaccountable terrors and apprehenſions, proceeding either from the unhappy ſituation of private or public affairs, from ill health, from a gloomy and melancholy

* Some of the opinions delivered in theſe Eſſays, with regard to the public tranſactions in the laſt century, the Author, on more accurate examination, found reaſon to retract in his *Hiſtory of* GREAT BRITAIN. And as he would not enſlave himſelf to the ſyſtems of either party, neither would he fetter his judgment by his own preconceived opinions and principles; nor is he aſhamed to acknowlege his miſtakes. Theſe miſtakes were indeed, at that time, almoſt univerſal in this kingdom.

diſpoſition, or from the concurrence of all theſe circumſtances. In ſuch a ſtate of mind, infinite unknown evils are dreaded from unknown agents; and where real objects of terror are wanting, the ſoul, active to its own prejudice, and foſtering its predominant inclination, finds imaginary ones, to whoſe power and malevolence it ſets no limits. As theſe enemies are entirely inviſible and unknown, the methods taken to appeaſe them are equally unaccountable, and conſiſt in ceremonies, obſervances, mortifications, ſacrifices, preſents, or in any practice, however abſurd or frivolous, which either folly or knavery recommends to a blind and terrified credulity. Weakneſs, fear, melancholy, together with ignorance, are, therefore, the true ſources of SUPERSTITION.

But the mind of man is alſo ſubject to an unaccountable elevation and preſumption, ariſing from proſperous ſucceſs, from luxuriant health, from ſtrong ſpirits, or from a bold and confident diſpoſition. In ſuch a ſtate of mind, the imagination ſwells with great, but confuſed conceptions, to which no ſublunary beauties or enjoyments can correſpond. Every thing mortal and periſhable vaniſhes as unworthy of attention. And a full range is given to the fancy in the inviſible regions or world of ſpirits, where the ſoul is at liberty to indulge itſelf in every imagination which may beſt ſuit its preſent taſte and diſpoſition. Hence ariſe raptures, tranſports, and ſurpriſing flights of fancy; and confidence and preſumption ſtill encreaſing, theſe raptures, being altogether unaccountable, and ſeeming quite beyond the reach of our ordinary faculties, are attributed to the immediate inſpiration of that Divine Being, who is the object of devotion. In a little time, the inſpired perſon comes to regard himſelf as a diſtinguiſhed favourite of the Divinity; and when this frenzy once takes place, which is the ſummit of enthuſiaſm, every whimſy is conſecrated: Human reaſon, and even morality, are rejected as fallacious guides: And the fanatic madman delivers himſelf over, blindly and without reſerve, to the ſuppoſed illapſes of the ſpirit, and to inſpiration from above.

Hope,

Hope, pride, presumption, a warm imagination, together with ignorance, are therefore the true sources of Enthusiasm.

These two species of false religion might afford occasion to many speculations; but I shall confine myself, at present, to a few reflections concerning their different influence on government and society.

My first reflection is, *That superstition is favourable to priestly power, and enthusiasm not less or rather more contrary to it than sound reason and philosophy.* As superstition is founded on fear, sorrow, and a depression of spirits, it represents the man to himself in such despicable colours, that he appears unworthy, in his own eyes, of approaching the Divine presence, and naturally has recourse to any other person, whose sanctity of life, or perhaps impudence and cunning, have made him be supposed more favoured by the Divinity. To him the superstitious intrust their devotions: To his care they recommend their prayers, petitions, and sacrifices: And by his means they hope to render their addresses acceptable to their incensed Deity. Hence the origin of Priests, who may justly be regarded as an invention of a timorous and abject superstition, which, ever diffident of itself, dares not offer up its own devotions, but ignorantly thinks to recommend itself to the Divinity by the mediation of his supposed friends and servants. As superstition is a considerable ingredient in almost all religions, even the most fanatical, there being nothing but philosophy able entirely to conquer these unaccountable terrors; hence it proceeds, that in almost every sect of religion there are priests to be found: But the stronger mixture there is of superstition, the higher is the authority of the priesthood.

On the other hand, it may be observed, that all enthusiasts have been free from the yoke of ecclesiastics, and have expressed great independence in their devotion; with a contempt of forms, ceremonies, and traditions. The *Quakers* are the most egregious, though, at the same time, the most innocent enthusiasts that have yet been

known; and are, perhaps, the only sect that have never admitted priests amongst them. The *Independents*, of all the ENGLISH sectaries, approach nearest to the *Quakers* in fanaticism, and in their freedom from priestly bondage. The *Presbyterians* follow after, at an equal distance in both particulars. In short, this observation is founded in experience; and will also appear to be founded in reason, if we consider, that, as enthusiasm arises from a presumptuous pride and confidence, it thinks itself sufficiently qualified to *approach* the Divinity without any human mediator. Its rapturous devotions are so fervent, that it even imagines itself *actually* to *approach* him by the way of contemplation and inward converse; which makes it neglect all those outward ceremonies and observances, to which the assistance of the priests appears so requisite in the eyes of their superstitious votaries. The fanatic consecrates himself, and bestows on his own person a sacred character, much superior to what forms and ceremonious institutions can confer on any other.

My *second* reflection with regard to these species of false religion is, *That religions, which partake of enthusiasm, are, on their first rise, more furious and violent than those which partake of superstition; but in a little time become more gentle and moderate.* The violence of this species of religion, when excited by novelty, and animated by opposition, appears from numberless instances; of the *Anabaptists* in GERMANY, the *Camisars* in FRANCE, the *Levellers* and other fanatics in ENGLAND, and the *Covenanters* in SCOTLAND. Enthusiasm being founded on strong spirits, and a presumptuous boldness of character, it naturally begets the most extreme resolutions; especially after it rises to that height as to inspire the deluded fanatic with the opinion of divine illuminations, and with a contempt for the common rules of reason, morality, and prudence.

It is thus enthusiasm produces the most cruel disorders in human society; but its fury is like that of thunder and tempest, which exhaust themselves in a little time, and leave the air more calm and serene than before.

When

When the firſt fire of enthuſiaſm is ſpent, men naturally, in all fanatical ſects, ſink into the greateſt remiſſneſs and coolneſs in ſacred matters; there being no body of men among them, endowed with ſufficient authority, whoſe intereſt is concerned to ſupport the religious ſpirit: No rites, no ceremonies, no holy obſervances, which may enter into the common train of life, and preſerve the ſacred principles from oblivion. Superſtition, on the contrary, ſteals in gradually and inſenſibly; renders men tame and ſubmiſſive; is acceptable to the magiſtrate, and ſeems inoffenſive to the people: Till at laſt the prieſt, having firmly eſtabliſhed his authority, becomes the tyrant and diſturber of human ſociety, by his endleſs contentions, perſecutions, and religious wars. How ſmoothly did the ROMISH church advance in her acquiſition of power? But into what diſmal convulſions did ſhe throw all EUROPE, in order to maintain it? On the other hand, our ſectaries, who were formerly ſuch dangerous bigots, are now become very free reaſoners; and the *Quakers* ſeem to approach nearly the only regular body of *Deiſts* in the univerſe, the *Literati*, or the diſciples of CONFUCIUS in CHINA*.

My *third* obſervation on this head is, *That ſuperſtition is an enemy to civil liberty, and enthuſiaſm a friend to it.* As ſuperſtition groans under the dominion of prieſts, and enthuſiaſm is deſtructive of all eccleſiaſtical power, this ſufficiently accounts for the preſent obſervation. Not to mention, that enthuſiaſm, being the infirmity of bold and ambitious tempers, is naturally accompanied with a ſpirit of liberty; as ſuperſtition, on the contrary, renders men tame and abject, and fits them for ſlavery. We learn from ENGLISH hiſtory, that during the civil wars, the *Independents* and *Deiſts*, though the moſt oppoſite in their religious principles; yet were united in their political ones, and were alike paſſionate for a commonwealth. And ſince the origin of *Whig* and *Tory*, the leaders of the *Whigs* have either been *Deiſts* or profeſt *Latitudinarians* in their principles; that is, friends to toleration,

* The CHINESE Literati have no prieſts or eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment.

ration, and indifferent to any particular ſect of *Chriſtians*: While the ſectaries, who have all a ſtrong tincture of enthuſiaſm, have always, without exception, concurred with that party in defence of civil liberty. The reſemblance in their ſuperſtitions long united the high-church *Tories* and the *Roman Catholics*, in ſupport of prerogative and kingly power; though experience of the tolerating ſpirit of the *Whigs* ſeems of late to have reconciled the *Catholics* to that party.

The *Moliniſts* and *Janſeniſts* in FRANCE have a thouſand unintelligible diſputes, which are not worthy the reflection of a man of ſenſe: But what principally diſtinguiſhes theſe two ſects, and alone merits attention, is the different ſpirit of their religion. The *Moliniſts* conducted by the *Jeſuits*, are great friends to ſuperſtition, rigid obſervers of external forms and ceremonies, and devoted to the authority of the prieſts, and to tradition. The *Janſeniſts* are enthuſiaſts, and zealous promoters of the paſſionate devotion, and of the inward life; little influenced by authority; and, in a word, but half Catholics. The conſequences are exactly conformable to the foregoing reaſoning. The *Jeſuits* are the tyrants of the people, and the ſlaves of the court: And the *Janſeniſts* preſerve alive the ſmall ſparks of the love of liberty, which are to be found in the FRENCH nation.

ESSAY

ESSAY XI.

Of the DIGNITY or MEANNESS of HUMAN NATURE.

THERE are certain ſects which ſecretly form themſelves in the learned world, as well as factions in the political; and though ſometimes they come not to an open rupture, they give a different turn to the ways of thinking of thoſe who have taken part on either ſide. The moſt remarkable of this kind are the ſects founded on the different ſentiments with regard to the *dignity of human nature;* which is a point that ſeems to have divided philoſophers and poets, as well as divines, from the beginning of the world to this day. Some exalt our ſpecies to the ſkies, and repreſent man as a kind of human demigod, who derives his origin from heaven, and retains evident marks of his lineage and deſcent. Others inſiſt upon the blind ſides of human nature, and can diſcover nothing, except vanity, in which man ſurpaſſes the other animals, whom he affects ſo much to deſpiſe. If an author poſſeſs the talent of rhetoric and declamation, he commonly takes part with the former: If his turn lie towards irony and ridicule, he naturally throws himſelf into the other extreme.

I am far from thinking that all thoſe who have depreciated our ſpecies have been enemies to virtue, and have expoſed the frailties of their fellow-creatures with any bad intention. On the contrary, I am ſenſible that a delicate ſenſe of morals, eſpecially when attended with a ſplenetic temper, is apt to give a man a diſguſt of the world, and to make him conſider the common courſe of human affairs with too much indignation. I muſt, however,

ever, be of opinion, that the ſentiments of thoſe who are inclined to think favourably of mankind, are more advantageous to virtue than the contrary principles, which give us a mean opinion of our nature. When a man is prepoſſeſſed with a high notion of his rank and character in the creation, he will naturally endeavour to act up to it, and will ſcorn to do a baſe or vicious action, which might ſink him below that figure which he makes in his own imagination. Accordingly we find, that all our polite and faſhionable moraliſts inſiſt upon this topic, and endeavour to repreſent vice as unworthy of man, as well as odious in itſelf.

We find few diſputes that are not founded on ſome ambiguity in the expreſſion; and I am perſuaded, that the preſent diſpute, concerning the dignity or meanneſs of human nature, is not more exempt from it than any other. It may therefore be worth while to conſider, what is real, and what is only verbal, in this controverſy.

That there is a natural difference between merit and demerit, virtue and vice, wiſdom and folly, no reaſonable man will deny: Yet it is evident, that in affixing the term which denotes either our approbation or blame, we are commonly more influenced by compariſon than by any fixed unalterable ſtandard in the nature of things. In like manner, quantity, and extenſion, and bulk, are by every one acknowledged to be real things: But when we call any animal *great* or *little*, we always form a ſecret compariſon between that animal and others of the ſame ſpecies; and it is that compariſon which regulates our judgment concerning its greatneſs. A dog and a horſe may be of the very ſame ſize, while the one is admired for the greatneſs of its bulk, and the other for the ſmallneſs. When I am preſent, therefore, at any diſpute, I always conſider with myſelf, whether it be a queſtion of compariſon or not that is the ſubject of the controverſy; and if it be, whether the diſputants compare the ſame objects together, or talk of things that are widely different.

In forming our notions of human nature, we are apt to make a comparison between men and animals, the only creatures endowed with thought that fall under our senses. Certainly this comparison is favourable to mankind. On the one hand, we see a creature, whose thoughts are not limited by any narrow bounds, either of place or time; who carries his researches into the most distant regions of this globe, and beyond this globe, to the planets and heavenly bodies; looks backward to consider the first origin, at least, the history of human race; casts his eye forward to see the influence of his actions upon posterity, and the judgments which will be formed of his character a thousand years hence; a creature, who traces causes and effects to a great length and intricacy; extracts general principles from particular appearances; improves upon his discoveries; corrects his mistakes; and makes his very errors profitable. On the other hand, we are presented with a creature the very reverse of this; limited in its observations and reasonings to a few sensible objects which surround it; without curiosity, without foresight; blindly conducted by instinct, and attaining, in a short time, its utmost perfection, beyond which it is never able to advance a single step. What a wide difference is there between these creatures! And how exalted a notion must we entertain of the former, in comparison of the latter!

There are two means commonly employed to destroy this conclusion: *First*, By making an unfair representation of the case, and insisting only upon the weaknesses of human nature. And *secondly*, By forming a new and secret comparison between man and beings of the most perfect wisdom. Among the other excellencies of man, this is one, that he can form an idea of perfections much beyond what he has experience of in himself; and is not limited in his conception of wisdom and virtue. He can easily exalt his notions, and conceive a degree of knowledge, which, when compared to his own, will make the latter appear very contemptible, and will cause the dif-

difference between that and the ſagacity of animals, in a manner, to diſappear and vaniſh. Now this being a point in which all the world is agreed, that human underſtanding falls infinitely ſhort of perfect wiſdom, it is proper we ſhould know when this compariſon takes place, that we may not diſpute where there is no real difference in our ſentiments. Man falls much more ſhort of perfect wiſdom, and even of his own ideas of perfect wiſdom, than animals do of man; yet the latter difference is ſo conſiderable, that nothing but a compariſon with the former can make it appear of little moment.

It is alſo uſual to *compare* one man with another; and finding very few whom we can call *wiſe* or *virtuous*, we are apt to entertain a contemptible notion of our ſpecies in general. That we may be ſenſible of the fallacy of this way of reaſoning, we may obſerve, that the honourable appellations of wiſe and virtuous, are not annexed to any particular degree of thoſe qualities of *wiſdom* and *virtue;* but ariſe altogether from the compariſon we make between one man and another. When we find a man, who arrives at ſuch a pitch of wiſdom as is very uncommon, we pronounce him a wiſe man: So that to ſay, there are few wiſe men in the world, is really to ſay nothing; ſince it is only by their ſcarcity that they merit that appellation. Were the loweſt of our ſpecies as wiſe as TULLY or lord BACON, we ſhould ſtill have reaſon to ſay that there are few wiſe men. For in that caſe we ſhould exalt our notions of wiſdom, and ſhould not pay a ſingular honour to any one who was not ſingularly diſtinguiſhed by his talents. In like manner, I have heard it obſerved by thoughtleſs people, that there are few women poſſeſſed of beauty, in compariſon of thoſe who want it; not conſidering, that we beſtow the epithet of *beautiful* only on ſuch as poſſeſs a degree of beauty that is common to them with a few. The ſame degree of beauty in a woman is called deformity, which is treated as real beauty in one of our ſex.

As it is uſual, in forming a notion of our ſpecies, to com-

compare it with the other ſpecies above or below it, or to compare the individuals of the ſpecies among themſelves; ſo we often compare together the different motives or actuating principles of human nature, in order to regulate our judgment concerning it. And, indeed, this is the only kind of compariſon which is worth our attention, or decides any thing in the preſent queſtion. Were our ſelfiſh and vicious principles ſo much predominant above our ſocial and virtuous as is aſſerted by ſome philoſophers, we ought undoubtedly to entertain a contemptible notion of human nature.

There is much of a diſpute of words in all this controverſy. When a man denies the ſincerity of all public ſpirit or affection to a country and community, I am at a loſs what to think of him. Perhaps he never felt this paſſion in ſo clear and diſtinct a manner as to remove all his doubts concerning its force and reality. But when he proceeds afterwards to reject all private friendſhip, if no intereſt or ſelf-love intermix itſelf, I am then confident that he abuſes terms, and confounds the ideas of things; ſince it is impoſſible for any one to be ſo ſelfiſh, or rather ſo ſtupid, as to make no difference between one man and another, and give no preference to qualities, which engages his approbation and eſteem. Is he alſo, ſay I, as inſenſible to anger as he pretends to be to friendſhip? And does injury and wrong no more affect him than kindneſs or benefits? Impoſſible: He does not know himſelf: He has forgotten the movements of his heart; or rather he makes uſe of a different language from the reſt of his countrymen, and calls not things by their proper names. What ſay you of natural affection? (I ſubjoin) Is that alſo a ſpecies of ſelf-love? Yes: All is ſelf-love. *Your* children are loved only becauſe they are yours: *Your* friend for a like reaſon: And *your* country engages you only ſo far as it has a connection with *yourſelf:* Were the idea of ſelf removed, nothing would affect you: You would be altogether unactive and inſenſible: Or, if you ever gave yourſelf any movement, it would only be from vanity, and a deſire of fame and

reputation to this same self. I am willing, reply I, to receive your interpretation of human actions, provided you admit the facts. That species of self-love, which displays itself in kindness to others, you must allow to have great influence over human actions, and even greater, on many occasions, than that which remains in its original shape and form. For how few are there, who, having a family, children, and relations, do not spend more on the maintenance and education of these than on their own pleasures? This indeed, you justly observe, may proceed from their self-love, since the prosperity of their family and friends is one, or the chief, of their pleasures, as well as their chief honour. Be you also one of these selfish men, and you are sure of every one's good opinion and good will; or, not to shock your ears with these expressions, the self-love of every one, and mine among the rest, will then incline us to serve you, and speak well of you.

In my opinion, there are two things which have led astray those philosophers that have insisted so much on the selfishness of man. In the *first* place, they found, that every act of virtue or friendship was attended with a secret pleasure; whence they concluded, that friendship and virtue could not be disinterested. But the fallacy of this is obvious. The virtuous sentiment or passion produces the pleasure, and does not arise from it. I feel a pleasure in doing good to my friend, because I love him; but do not love him for the sake of that pleasure.

In the *second* place, it has always been found, that the virtuous are far from being indifferent to praise; and therefore they have been represented as a set of vain-glorious men, who had nothing in view but the applauses of others. But this also is a fallacy. It is very unjust in the world, when they find any tincture of vanity in a laudable action, to depreciate it upon that account, or ascribe it entirely to that motive. The case is not the same with vanity as with other passions. Where avarice or revenge enters into any seemingly virtuous action,

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it is difficult for us to determine how far it enters, and it is natural to suppose it the sole actuating principle. But vanity is so closely allied to virtue, and to love the fame of laudable actions approaches so near the love of laudable actions for their own sake, that these passions are more capable of mixture than any other kinds of affection; and it is almost impossible to have the latter without some degree of the former. Accordingly we find, that this passion for glory is always warped and varied according to the particular taste or disposition of the mind on which it falls. NERO had the same vanity in driving a chariot that TRAJAN had in governing the empire with justice and ability. To love the glory of virtuous deeds is a sure proof of the love of virtue.

ESSAY XII.

Of CIVIL LIBERTY.

THOSE who employ their pens on political subjects, free from party-rage and party-prejudices, cultivate a science, which, of all others, contributes most to public utility, and even to the private satisfaction of those who addict themselves to the study of it. I am apt, however, to entertain a suspicion, that the world is still too young to fix many general truths in politics, which will remain true to the latest posterity. We have not as yet had experience of three thousand years; so that not only the art of reasoning is still imperfect in this science, as in all others, but we even want sufficient materials upon which we can reason. It is not fully known, what degree of refinement, either in virtue or vice, human nature is susceptible of; nor what may be expected of mankind from any great revolution in their education,

cuſtoms, or principles. MACHIAVEL was certainly a great genius; but having confined his ſtudy to the furious and tyrannical governments of ancient times, or to the little diſorderly principalities of ITALY, his reaſonings, eſpecially upon monarchical government, have been found extremely defective; and there ſcarcely is any maxim in his *Prince*, which ſubſequent experience has not entirely refuted. *A weak prince*, ſays he, *is incapable of receiving good counſel; for if he conſult with ſeveral, he will not be able to chooſe among their different counſels. If he abandon himſelf to one, that miniſter may, perhaps, have capacity; but he will not long be a miniſter: He will be ſure to diſpoſſeſs his maſter, and place himſelf and his family upon the throne.* I mention this among many inſtances of the errors of that politician, proceeding in a great meaſure from his having lived in too early an age of the world to be a good judge of political truth. Almoſt all the princes of EUROPE are at preſent governed by their miniſters, and have been ſo for near two centuries; and yet no ſuch event has ever happened, or can poſſibly happen: SEJANUS might protect dethroning the CÆSARS; but FLEURY, though ever ſo vicious, could not, while in his ſenſes, entertain the leaſt hopes of diſpoſſeſſing the BOURBONS.

Trade was never eſteemed an affair of ſtate till the laſt century; and there ſcarcely is any ancient writer on politics who has made mention of it *. Even the ITALIANS have kept a profound ſilence with regard to it, though it has now engaged the chief attention, as well of miniſters of ſtate as of ſpeculative reaſoners. The great opulence, grandeur, and military atchievements of the two maritime powers, ſeem firſt to have inſtructed mankind in the importance of an extenſive commerce.

Having, therefore, intended in this eſſay to make a full compariſon of civil liberty and abſolute government, and to ſhow the great advantages of the former above the latter,

* XENOPHON mentions it; but with a doubt if it be of any advantage to a ſtate. Εἰδε καὶ ἐμπορία οφὲλεῖ τι πόλιν, &c. XEN. HIERO. PLATO totally excludes it from his imaginary republic. De legibus, lib. iv.

latter, I began to entertain a ſuſpicion, that no man in this age was ſufficiently qualified for ſuch an undertaking; and that whatever any one ſhould advance on that head, would, in all probability, be refuted by further experience, and be rejected by poſterity. Such mighty revolutions have happened in human affairs, and ſo many events have ariſen contrary to the expectation of the ancients, that they are ſufficient to beget the ſuſpicion of ſtill further changes.

It had been obſerved by the ancients, that all the arts and ſciences aroſe among free nations; and that the Persians and Egyptians, notwithſtanding their eaſe, opulence, and luxury, made but faint efforts towards a reliſh in thoſe finer pleaſures, which were carried to ſuch perfection by the Greeks, amidſt continual wars, attended with poverty, and the greateſt ſimplicity of life and manners. It had alſo been obſerved, that when the Greeks loſt their liberty, though they increaſed mightily in riches, by means of the conqueſts of Alexander; yet the arts, from that moment, declined among them, and have never ſince been able to raiſe their head in that climate. Learning was tranſplanted to Rome, the only free nation at that time in the univerſe; and having met with ſo favourable a ſoil, it made prodigious ſhoots for above a century; till the decay of liberty produced alſo the decay of letters, and ſpread a total barbariſm over the world. From theſe two experiments, of which each was double in its kind, and ſhowed the fall of learning in abſolute governments, as well as its riſe in popular ones, Longinus thought himſelf ſufficiently juſtified in aſſerting, that the arts and ſciences could never flouriſh but in a free government: And in this opinion he has been followed by ſeveral eminent writers * in our own country, who either confined their view merely to ancient facts, or entertained too great a partiality in the favour of that form of government eſtabliſhed amongſt us.

* Mr Addison and Lord Shaftesbury.

But what would these writers have said to the instances of modern ROME and of FLORENCE? Of which the former carried to perfection all the finer arts of sculpture, painting, and music, as well as poetry, though it groaned under tyranny, and under the tyranny of priests; while the latter made its chief progress in the arts and sciences after it began to lose its liberty by the usurpation of the family of MEDICI. ARIOSTO, TASSO, GALILEO, more than RAPHAEL and MICHAEL ANGELO, were not born in republics. And though the LOMBARD school was famous as well as the ROMAN, yet the VENETIANS have had the smallest share in its honours, and seem rather inferior to the other ITALIANS in their genius for the arts and sciences. RUBENS established his school at ANTWERP, not at AMSTERDAM: DRESDEN, not HAMBURG, is the centre of politeness in GERMANY.

But the most eminent instance of the flourishing of learning in absolute governments is that of FRANCE, which scarcely ever enjoyed any established liberty, and yet has carried the arts and sciences as near perfection as any other nation. The ENGLISH are perhaps greater philosophers; the ITALIANS better painters and musicians; the ROMANS were greater orators: But the FRENCH are the only people, except the GREEKS, who have been at once philosophers, poets, orators, historians, painters, architects, sculptors, and musicians. With regard to the stage, they have excelled even the GREEKS, who far excelled the ENGLISH; and, in common life, they have in a great measure perfected that art, the most useful and agreeable of any, *l'Art de Vivre*, the art of society and conversation.

If we consider the state of the sciences and polite arts in our own country, HORACE's observation with regard to the ROMANS may in a great measure be applied to the BRITISH.

——*Sed in longum tamen ævum*
Manserunt, hodieque manent vestigia ruris.

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The elegance and propriety of ſtyle have been very much neglected among us. We have no dictionary of our language, and ſcarcely a tolerable grammar. The firſt polite proſe we have was writ by a man who is ſtill alive *. As to Sprat, Locke, and even Temple, they knew too little of the rules of art to be eſteemed elegant writers. The proſe of Bacon, Harrington, and Milton, is altogether ſtiff and pedantic, though their ſenſe be excellent. Men in this country have been ſo much occupied in the great diſputes of *Religion*, *Politics*, and *Philoſophy*, that they had no reliſh for the ſeemingly minute obſervations of grammar and criticiſm. And tho' this turn of thinking muſt have conſiderably improved our ſenſe and our talent of reaſoning, it muſt be confeſſed, that, even in thoſe ſciences above mentioned, we have not any ſtandard-book which we can tranſmit to poſterity: and the utmoſt we have to boaſt of are a few eſſays towards a more juſt philoſophy; which indeed promiſe well, but have not as yet reached any degree of perfection.

It has become an eſtabliſhed opinion, that commerce can never flouriſh but in a free government; and this opinion ſeems to be founded on a longer and larger experience than the foregoing with regard to the arts and ſciences. If we trace commerce in its progreſs through Tyre, Athens, Syracuse, Carthage, Venice, Florence, Genoa, Antwerp, Holland, England, &c. we ſhall always find it to have fixed its ſeat in free governments. The three greateſt trading towns now in Europe are London, Amsterdam, and Hamburgh; all free cities, and proteſtant cities, that is, enjoying a double liberty. It muſt, however, be obſerved, that the great jealouſy entertained of late with regard to the commerce of France, ſeems to prove, that this maxim is no more certain and infallible than the foregoing, and that the ſubjects of an abſolute prince may become our rivals in commerce as well as in learning.

Durſt I deliver my opinion in an affair of ſo much

* Dr Swift.

uncertainty, I would assert, that, notwithstanding the efforts of the FRENCH, there is something hurtful to commerce inherent in the very nature of absolute government, and inseparable from it; though the reason I should assign for this opinion is somewhat different from that which is commonly insisted on. Private property seems to me almost as secure in a civilized EUROPEAN monarchy as in a republic; nor is danger much apprehended in such a government from the violence of the sovereign, more than we commonly dread harm from thunder or earthquakes, or any accident the most unusual and extraordinary. Avarice, the spur of industry, is so obstinate a passion, and works its way through so many real dangers and difficulties, that it is not likely to be scared by any imaginary danger, which is so small, that it scarcely admits of calculation. Commerce, therefore, in my opinion, is apt to decay in absolute governments, not because it is there less *secure*, but because it is less *honourable*. A subordination of ranks is absolutely necessary to the support of monarchy. Birth, titles, and place, must be honoured above industry and riches. And while these notions prevail, all the considerable traders will be tempted to throw up their commerce, in order to purchase some of those employments to which privileges and honours are annexed.

Since I am upon this head, of the alterations which time has produced or may produce in politics, I must observe, that all kinds of government, free and absolute, seem to have undergone, in modern times, a great change for the better, with regard both to foreign and domestic management. The *balance of power* is a secret in politics fully known only to the present age; and I must add, that the internal POLICE of states has also received great improvements within the last century. We are informed by SALLUST, that CATILINE's army was much augmented by the accession of the highwaymen about Rome; though I believe, that all of that profession, who are at present dispersed over EUROPE, would not amount to a regiment. In CICERO's pleadings for

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Milo, I find this argument, among others, made uſe of to prove that his client had not aſſaſſinated Clodius. Had Milo, ſaid he, intended to have killed Clodius, he had not attacked him in the day-time, and at ſuch a diſtance from the city: He had waylaid him at night near the ſuburbs, where it might have been pretended that he was killed by robbers; and the frequency of the accident would have favoured the deceit. This is a ſurpriſing proof of the looſe policy of Rome, and of the number and force of theſe robbers; ſince Clodius * was at that time attended by thirty ſlaves, who were completely armed, and ſufficiently accuſtomed to blood and danger in the frequent tumults excited by that ſeditious tribune.

But though all kinds of government be improved in modern times, yet monarchical government ſeems to have made the greateſt advances towards perfection. It may now be affirmed of civilized monarchies, what was formerly ſaid in praiſe of republics alone, *that they are a government of Laws, not of Men.* They are found ſuſceptible of order, method, and conſtancy, to a ſurpriſing degree. Property is there ſecure; induſtry encouraged; the arts flouriſh; and the prince lives ſecure among his ſubjects, like a father among his children. There are perhaps, and have been for two centuries, near two hundred abſolute princes, great and ſmall, in Europe; and, allowing twenty years to each reign, we may ſuppoſe, that there have been in the whole two thouſand monarchs or tyrants, as the Greeks would have called them: Yet of theſe there has not been one, not even Philip II. of Spain, ſo bad as Tiberius, Caligula, Nero, or Domitian, who were four in twelve amongſt the Roman emperors. It muſt, however, be confeſſed, that, though monarchical governments have approached nearer to popular ones in gentleneſs and ſtability, they are ſtill inferior. Our modern education and cuſtoms inſtil more humanity and moderation than the ancient;

* *Vide Aſc. Ped. in Orat. pro Milone.*

but have not as yet been able to overcome entirely the disadvantages of that form of government.

But here I must beg leave to advance a conjecture, which seems probable, but which posterity alone can fully judge of. I am apt to think, that in monarchical governments there is a source of improvement, and in popular governments a source of degeneracy, which in time will bring these species of civil polity still nearer an equality. The greatest abuses which arise in FRANCE, the most perfect model of pure monarchy, proceed not from the number or weight of the taxes beyond what are to be met with in free countries; but from the expensive, unequal, arbitrary, and intricate method of levying them, by which the industry of the poor, especially of the peasants and farmers, is in a great measure discouraged, and agriculture rendered a beggarly and slavish employment. But to whose advantage do these abuses tend? If to that of the nobility, they might be esteemed inherent in that form of government, since the nobility are the true supports of monarchy; and it is natural their interest should be more consulted, in such a constitution, than that of the people. But the nobility are in reality the chief losers by this oppression, since it ruins their estates and beggars their tenants. The only gainers by it are the *Financiers*, a race of men rather odious to the nobility and the whole kingdom. If a prince or minister, therefore, should arise, endowed with sufficient discernment to know his own and the public interest, and with sufficient force of mind to break through ancient customs, we might expect to see these abuses remedied; in which case, the difference between that absolute government and our free one would not appear so considerable as at present.

The source of degeneracy which may be remarked in free governments, consists in the practice of contracting debt and mortgaging the public revenues, by which taxes may in time become altogether intolerable, and all the property of the state be brought into the hands of the public. This practice is of modern date. The

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Athenians, though governed by a republic, paid near two hundred *per cent.* for those sums of money which any emergence made it necessary for them to borrow, as we learn from Xenophon *. Among the moderns, the Dutch first introduced the practice of borrowing great sums at low interest, and have well nigh ruined themselves by it. Absolute princes have also contracted debt; but as an absolute prince may make a bankruptcy when he pleases, his people can never be oppressed by his debts. In popular governments, the people, and chiefly those who have the highest offices, being commonly the public creditors, it is difficult for the state to make use of this remedy, which, however it may sometimes be necessary, is always cruel and barbarous. This therefore seems to be an inconvenience, which nearly threatens all free governments, especially our own, at the present juncture of affairs. And what a strong motive is this to increase our frugality of public money; lest, for want of it, we be reduced, by the multiplicity of taxes, or, what is worse, by our public impotence and inability for defence, to curse our very liberty, and wish ourselves in the same state of servitude with all the nations that surround us?

* Κτησιν δε αν' ουδενος αν ουτω καλην κτησαιντο ωσπερ αφ ου ανπροϊελεσωσιν εις την αφορμην—οι δε γε πλειστοι Αθηναιων πλειονος πλουτου κατ' ενιαυτον η οσα ον εισενεγκοσιν, οι γαρ μναν προϊελεσαντες, εγγυς δυοιν μναιν προσοδον εξυσι—ο δοκει των προσοδων ασφαλεστατον τε και πολυχρονιωτατον ειναι. ΞΙΝ. ΠΟΡΟΙ.

ESSAY

ESSAY XIII.

Of Eloquence.

THOSE who conſider the periods and revolutions of human kind, as repreſented in hiſtory, are entertained with a ſpectacle full of pleaſure and variety, and ſee with ſurpriſe the manners, cuſtoms, and opinions of the ſame ſpecies ſuſceptible of ſuch prodigious changes in different periods of time. It may, however, be obſerved, that in *civil* hiſtory there is found a much greater uniformity than in the hiſtory of learning and ſcience, and that the wars, negociations, and politics of one age, reſemble more thoſe of another, than the taſte, wit, and and ſpeculative principles. Intereſt and ambition, honour and ſhame, friendſhip and enmity, gratitude and revenge, are the prime movers in all public tranſactions; and theſe paſſions are of a very ſtubborn and intractable nature, in compariſon of the ſentiments and underſtanding, which are eaſily varied by education and example. The Goths were much more inferior to the Romans in taſte and ſcience than in courage and virtue.

But, not to compare together nations ſo widely different, it may be obſerved, that even this later period of human learning is in many reſpects of an oppoſite character to the ancient; and that if we be ſuperior in philoſophy, we are ſtill, notwithſtanding all our refinements, much inferior in eloquence.

In ancient times, no work of genius was thought to require ſo great parts and capacity, as the ſpeaking in public; and ſome eminent writers have pronounced the talents, even of a great poet or philoſopher, to be of an inferior nature to thoſe which are requiſite for ſuch an undertaking. Greece and Rome produced, each of them,

them, but one accomplished orator; and whatever praises the other celebrated speakers might merit, they were still esteemed much inferior to these great models of eloquence. It is observable, that the ancient critics could scarcely find two orators in any age, who deserved to be placed precisely in the same rank, and possessed the same degree of merit. Calvus, Cælius, Curio, Hortensius, Cæsar, rose one above another: But the greatest of that age was inferior to Cicero, the most eloquent speaker that had ever appeared in Rome. Those of fine taste, however, pronounced this judgment of the Roman orator, as well as of the Grecian, that both of them surpassed in eloquence all that had ever appeared, but that they were far from reaching the perfection of their art, which was infinite, and not only exceeded human force to attain, but human imagination to conceive. Cicero declares himself dissatisfied with his own performances; nay, even with those of Demosthenes. *Ita sunt avidæ & capaces meæ aures*, says he, *& semper aliquid immensum, infinitumque desiderant.*

Of all the polite and learned nations, England alone possesses a popular government, or admits into the legislature such numerous assemblies as can be supposed to lie under the dominion of eloquence. But what has England to boast of in this particular? In enumerating the great men who have done honour to our country, we exult in our poets and philosophers; but what orators are ever mentioned? Or where are the monuments of their genius to be met with? There are found, indeed, in our histories, the names of several who directed the resolutions of our parliament: But neither themselves nor others have taken the pains to preserve their speeches; and the authority which they possessed seems to have been owing to their experience, wisdom, or power, more than to their talents for oratory. At present there are above half a dozen speakers in the two houses, who, in the judgment of the public, have reached very near the same pitch of eloquence; and no man pretends to give any one the preference above the rest. This seems to

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me a certain proof, that none of them have attained much beyond a mediocrity in their art, and that the ſpecies of eloquence which they aſpire to, gives no exerciſe to the ſublimer faculties of the mind, but may be reached by ordinary talents and a ſlight application. A hundred cabinet-makers in LONDON can work a table or a chair equally well; but no one poet can write verſes with ſuch ſpirit and elegance as Mr POPE.

We are told, that when DEMOSTHENES was to plead, all ingenious men flocked to ATHENS from the moſt remote parts of GREECE, as to the moſt celebrated ſpectacle of the world *. At LONDON you may ſee men ſauntering in the court of requeſts, while the moſt important debate is carrying on in the two houſes; and many do not think themſelves ſufficiently compenſated, for the loſing of their dinners, by all the eloquence of our moſt celebrated ſpeakers. When old CIBBER is to act, the curioſity of ſeveral is more excited than when our prime miniſter is to defend himſelf from a motion for his removal or impeachment.

Even a perſon unacquainted with the noble remains of ancient orators, may judge, from a few ſtrokes, that the ſtyle or ſpecies of their eloquence was infinitely more ſublime than that which modern orators aſpire to. How abſurd would it appear, in our temperate and calm ſpeakers, to make uſe of an *Apoſtrophe*, like that noble one of DEMOSTHENES, ſo much celebrated by QUINTILIAN and LONGINUS, when juſtifying the unſucceſsful battle of CHÆRONEA, he breaks out, *No, my Fellow-Citizens, No: You have not erred. I ſwear by the* manes *of thoſe heroes who fought for the ſame cauſe in the plains of* MARATHON and PLATÆA. Who could now endure ſuch a bold and poetical figure as that which CICERO employs, after deſcribing in the moſt tragical terms the crucifixion of a ROMAN citizen: *Should I paint the horrors*

* Ne illud quidem intelligunt, non modo ita memoriæ proditum eſſe, ſed ita neceſſe fuiſſe, cum DEMOSTHENES dicturus eſſet, ut concurſus, audiendi cauſa, ex tota GRECIA fierent. At cum iſti ATTICI dicunt, non modo a corona (quod eſt ipſum miſerabile) ſed etiam ab advocatis relinquuntur. CICERO de Claris Oratoribus.

rors of this ſcene, not to Roman *citizens, not to the allies of our ſtate, not to thoſe who have ever heard of the* Roman *Name, not even to men, but to brute-creatures; or, to go farther, ſhould I lift up my voice in the moſt deſolate ſolitude to the rocks and mountains, yet ſhould I ſurely ſee thoſe rude and inanimate parts of nature moved with horror and indignation at the recital of ſo enormous an action* *. With what a blaze of eloquence muſt ſuch a ſentence be ſurrounded to give it grace, or cauſe it to make any impreſſion on the hearers? And what noble art and ſublime talents are requiſite to arrive, by juſt degrees, at a ſentiment ſo bold and exceſſive: To inflame the audience, ſo as to make them accompany the ſpeaker in ſuch violent paſſions, and ſuch elevated conceptions: And to conceal, under a torrent of eloquence, the artifice by which all this is effectuated! Should this ſentiment even appear to us exceſſive, as perhaps it juſtly may, it will at leaſt ſerve to give an idea of the ſtyle of ancient eloquence, where ſuch ſwelling expreſſions were not rejected as wholly monſtrous and gigantic.

Suitable to this vehemence of thought and expreſſion, was the vehemence of action obſerved in the ancient orators. The *ſupploſio pedis*, or ſtamping with the foot, was one of the moſt uſual and moderate geſtures which they made uſe of †; though that is now eſteemed too violent, either for the ſenate, bar, or pulpit, and is only admitted into the theatre, to accompany the moſt violent paſſions which are there repreſented.

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* *The original is;* Quod ſi hæc non ad cives Romanos, non ad aliquos amicos noſtræ civitatis, non ad eos qui populi Romani nomen audiſſent; denique, ſi non ad homines, verùm ad beſtias; aut etiam, ut longius progrediar, ſi in aliqua deſertiſſima ſolitudine, ad ſaxa & ad ſcopulos hæc conqueri & deplorare vellem, tamen omnia muta atque inanima, tanta & tam indigna rerum atrocitate commoverentur. Cic. in Ver

† Ubi dolor? Ubi ardor animi, qui etiam ex infantium ingeniis elicere voces & querelas ſolet? nulla perturbatio animi, nulla corporis; frons non percuſſa, non femur; pedis (*quod minimum eſt*) nulla ſupploſio. Itaque tantum abfuit ut inflammare noſtros animos; ſomnum iſto loco vix tenebamus. Cicero de Claris Oratoribus.

One is somewhat at a loss to what cause we may ascribe so sensible a decline of eloquence in later ages. The genius of mankind, at all times, is perhaps equal: The moderns have applied themselves, with great industry and success, to all the other arts and sciences: And a learned nation possesses a popular government; a circumstance which seems requisite for the full display of these noble talents: But notwithstanding all these advantages, our progress in eloquence is very inconsiderable, in comparison of the advances which we have made in all other parts of learning.

Shall we assert, that the strains of ancient eloquence are unsuitable to our age, and ought not to be imitated by modern orators? Whatever reasons may be made use of to prove this, I am persuaded they will be found, upon examination, to be unsound and unsatisfactory.

First, it may be said, that in ancient times, during the flourishing period of GREEK and ROMAN learning, the municipal laws, in every state, were but few and simple, and the decision of causes was, in a great measure, left to the equity and common sense of the judges. The study of the laws was not then a laborious occupation, requiring the drudgery of a whole life to finish it, and incompatible with every other study or profession. The great statesmen and generals among the ROMANS were all lawyers; and CICERO, to show the facility of acquiring this science, declares, that in the midst of all his occupations, he would undertake, in a few days, to make himself a complete civilian. Now, where a pleader addresses himself to the equity of his judges, he has much more room to display his eloquence, than where he must draw his arguments from strict laws, statutes, and precedents. In the former case, many circumstances must be taken in; many personal considerations regarded; and even favour and inclination, which it belongs to the orator, by his art and eloquence, to conciliate, may be disguised under the appearance of equity. But how shall a modern lawyer have leisure to quit his toilsome occupations, in order to gather the flowers of

PARNASSUS? Or what opportunity ſhall he have of diſplaying them, amidſt the rigid and ſubtle arguments, objections, and replies, which he is obliged to make uſe of? The greateſt genius, and greateſt orator, who ſhould pretend to plead before the *Chancellor*, after a month's ſtudy of the laws, would only labour to make himſelf ridiculous.

I am ready to own, that this circumſtance of the multiplicity and intricacy of laws, is a diſcouragement to eloquence in modern times: But I aſſert, that it will not entirely account for the decline of that noble art. It may baniſh oratory from WESTMINSTER-HALL, but not from either houſe of parliament. Among the ATHENIANS, the AREOPAGITES expreſsly forbad all allurements of eloquence; and ſome have pretended that in the GREEK orations, written in the *judiciary* form, there is not ſo bold and rhetorical a ſtyle as appears in the ROMAN. But to what a pitch did the ATHENIANS carry their eloquence in the *deliberative* kind, when affairs of ſtate were canvaſſed, and the liberty, happineſs, and honour of the republic were the ſubject of debate? Diſputes of this nature elevate the genius above all others, and give the fulleſt ſcope to eloquence; and ſuch diſputes are very frequent in this nation.

Secondly, It may be pretended that the decline of eloquence is owing to the ſuperior good ſenſe of the moderns, who reject with diſdain all thoſe rhetorical tricks employed to ſeduce the judges, and will admit of nothing but ſolid argument in any debate of deliberation. If a man be accuſed of murder, the fact muſt be proved by witneſſes and evidence; and the laws will afterwards determine the puniſhment of the criminal. It would be ridiculous to deſcribe, in ſtrong colours, the horror and cruelty of the action: To introduce the relations of the dead; and, at a ſignal, make them throw themſelves at the feet of the judges, imploring juſtice with tears and lamentations: And ſtill more ridiculous would it be, to employ a picture repreſenting the bloody deed, in order to move the judges by the diſplay of ſo tragical a ſpectacle;

tacle; though we know that this artifice was sometimes practised by the pleaders of old*. Now, banish the pathetic from public discourses, and you reduce the speakers merely to modern eloquence; that is, to good sense, delivered in proper expression.

Perhaps it may be acknowledged, that our modern customs, or our superior good sense, if you will, should make our orators more cautious and reserved than the ancient, in attempting to inflame the passions, or elevate the imagination of their audience; but I see no reason why it should make them despair absolutely of succeeding in that attempt. It should make them redouble their art, not abandon it entirely. The ancient orators seem also to have been on their guard against this jealousy of their audience; but they took a different way of eluding it†. They hurried away with such a torrent of sublime and pathetic, that they left their hearers no leisure to perceive the artifice by which they were deceived. Nay, to consider the matter aright, they were not deceived by any artifice. The orator, by the force of his own genius and eloquence, first inflamed himself with anger, indignation, pity, sorrow; and then communicated those impetuous movements to his audience.

Does any man pretend to have more good sense than JULIUS CÆSAR? yet that haughty conqueror, we know, was so subdued by the charms of CICERO's eloquence, that he was in a manner constrained to change his settled purpose and resolution, and to absolve a criminal, whom, before that orator pleaded, he was determined to condemn.

Some objections, I own, notwithstanding his vast success, may lie against some passages of the ROMAN orator. He is too florid and rhetorical: His figures are too striking and palpable: The divisions of his discourse are drawn chiefly from the rules of the schools: And his wit disdains not always the artifice even of a pun, rhyme, or jingle of words. The GRECIAN addressed himself to an audience much less refined than the ROMAN senate or judges.

* QUINTIL. lib. vi. cap. 1. † LONGINUS, cap. 15.

judges. The loweſt vulgar of ATHENS were his ſovereigns, and the arbiters of his eloquence *. Yet is his manner more chaſte and auſtere than that of the other. Could it be copied, its ſucceſs would be infallible over a modern aſſembly. It is rapid harmony, exactly adjuſted to the ſenſe: It is vehement reaſoning, without any appearance of art: It is diſdain, anger, boldneſs, freedom, involved in a continued ſtream of argument: And of all human productions, the orations of DEMOSTHENES preſent to us the models which approach the neareſt to perfection.

Thirdly, It may be pretended, that the diſorders of the ancient governments, and the enormous crimes of which the citizens were often guilty, afforded much ampler matter for eloquence than can be met with among the moderns. Were there no VERRES or CATILINE, there would be no CICERO. But that this reaſon can have no great influence, is evident. It would be eaſy to find a PHILIP in modern times; but where ſhall we find a DEMOSTHENES?

What remains, then, but that we lay the blame on the want of genius or of judgment in our ſpeakers, who either found themſelves incapable of reaching the heights of ancient eloquence, or rejected all ſuch endeavours as unſuitable to the ſpirit of modern aſſemblies? A few ſucceſsful attempts of this nature might rouſe the genius of the nation, excite the emulation of the youth, and accuſtom our ears to a more ſublime and more pathetic elocution, than what we have been hitherto entertained with. There is certainly ſomething accidental in the firſt riſe and the progreſs of the arts in any nation. I doubt whether a very ſatisfactory reaſon can be given, why ancient ROME, though it received all its refinements from GREECE, could attain only to a reliſh for ſtatuary, painting, and architecture, without reaching the practice of theſe arts: While modern ROME has been excited by a few remains found among the ruins of antiquity, and has produced artiſts of the greateſt eminence and

* See NOTE [D].

distinction. Had such a cultivated genius for oratory, as WALLER's for poetry, arisen, during the civil wars, when liberty began to be fully established, and popular assemblies to enter into all the most material points of government; I am persuaded so illustrious an example would have given a quite different turn to BRITISH eloquence, and made us reach the perfection of the ancient model. Our orators would then have done honour to their country, as well as our poets, geometers, and philosophers, and BRITISH CICEROS have appeared, as well as BRITISH ARCHIMEDESES and VIRGILS.

It is seldom or never found, when a false taste in poetry or eloquence prevails among any people, that it has been preferred to a true, upon comparison and reflection. It commonly prevails merely from ignorance of the true, and from the want of perfect models, to lead men into a juster apprehension, and more refined relish of those productions of genius. When *these* appear, they soon unite all suffrages in their favour, and, by their natural and powerful charms, gain over, even the most prejudiced, to the love and admiration of them. The principles of every passion, and of every sentiment, is in every man; and when touched properly, they rise to life, and warm the heart, and convey that satisfaction by which a work of genius is distinguished from the adulterate beauties of a capricious wit and fancy. And if this observation be true with regard to all the liberal arts, it must be peculiarly so with regard to eloquence; which, being merely calculated for the public, and for men of the world, cannot, with any pretence of reason, appeal from the people to more refined judges; but must submit to the public verdict, without reserve or limitation. Whoever, upon comparison, is deemed by a common audience the greatest orator, ought most certainly to be pronounced such by men of science and erudition. And though an indifferent speaker may triumph for a long time, and be esteemed altogether perfect by the vulgar, who are satisfied with his accomplishments, and know not in what he is defective; yet, whenever the true

true genius arises, *he* draws to him the attention of every one, and immediately appears superior to his rival.

Now to judge by this rule, ancient eloquence, that is, the sublime and passionate, is of a much juster taste than the modern, or the argumentative and rational; and, if properly executed, will always have more command and authority over mankind. We are satisfied with our mediocrity, because we have had no experience of any thing better: But the ancients had experience of both, and upon comparison, gave the preference to that kind of which they have left us such applauded models. For, if I mistake not, our modern eloquence is of the same style or species with that which ancient critics denominated Attic eloquence, that is, calm, elegant, and subtile, which instructed the reason more than affected the passions, and never raised its tone above argument or common discourse. Such was the eloquence of Lysias among the Athenians, and of Calvus among the Romans. These were esteemed in their time; but when compared with Demosthenes and Cicero, were eclipsed like a taper when set in the rays of a meridian sun. Those latter orators possessed the same elegance and subtilty, and force of argument, with the former; but what rendered them chiefly admirable, was that pathetic and sublime, which, on proper occasions, they threw into their discourse, and by which they commanded the resolution of their audience.

Of this species of eloquence we have scarcely had any instance in England, at least in our public speakers. In our writers we have had some instances, which have met with great applause, and might assure our ambitious youth of equal or superior glory in attempts for the revival of ancient eloquence. Lord Bolingbroke's productions, with all their defects in argument, method, and precision, contain a force and energy which our orators scarcley ever aim at; though it is evident, that such an elevated style has much better grace in a speaker than in a writer, and is assured of more prompt and more astonishing success. It is there seconded by the graces of

voice and action: The movements are mutually communicated between the orator and the audience: And the very aspect of a large assembly, attentive to the discourse of one man, must inspire him with a peculiar elevation, sufficient to give a propriety to the strongest figures and expressions. It is true, there is a great prejudice against *set speeches;* and a man cannot escape ridicule, who repeats a discourse as a school-boy does his lesson, and takes no notice of any thing that has been advanced in the course of the debate. But where is the necessity of falling into this absurdity? A public speaker must know beforehand the question under debate. He may compose all the arguments, objections, and answers, such as he thinks will be most proper for his discourse *. If any thing new occur, he may supply it from his invention; nor will the difference be very apparent between his elaborate and his extemporary compositions. The mind naturally continues with the same *impetus* or *force* which it has acquired by its motion; as a vessel, once impelled by the oars, carries on its course for some time when the original impulse is suspended.

I shall conclude this subject with observing, that even though our modern orators should not elevate their style, or aspire to a rivalship with the ancient; yet is there, in most of their speeches, a material defect, which they might correct, without departing from that composed air of argument and reasoning to which they limit their ambition. Their great affectation of extemporary discourses has made them reject all order and method, which seems so requisite to argument, and without which it is scarcely possible to produce an entire conviction on the mind. It is not that one would recommend many divisions in a public discourse, unless the subject very evidently offer them; but it is easy, without this formality, to observe a method, and make that method conspicuous to

* The first of the ATHENIANS who composed and wrote his speeches was PERICLES, a man of business and a man of sense, if ever there was one, Πρωτος γραπτον λογον εν δικαστηριω ηιηε, των ωρο ουτω σχεδι ζοιτων. Suidas in Περικλης.

to the hearers, who will be infinitely pleaſed to ſee the arguments riſe naturally from one another, and will retain a more thorough perſuaſion than can ariſe from the ſtrongeſt reaſons which are thrown together in confuſion.

ESSAY XIV.

Of the Rise and Progress of the Arts and Sciences.

NOTHING requires greater nicety in our inquiries concerning human affairs, than to diſtinguiſh exactly what is owing to *chance*, and what proceeds from *cauſes;* nor is there any ſubject in which an author is more liable to deceive himſelf by falſe ſubtleties and refinements. To ſay that any event is derived from chance, cuts ſhort all farther inquiry concerning it, and leaves the writer in the ſame ſtate of ignorance with the reſt of mankind. But when the event is ſuppoſed to proceed from certain and ſtable cauſes, he may then diſplay his ingenuity in aſſigning theſe cauſes; and as a man of any ſubtlety can never be at a loſs in this particular, he has thereby an opportunity of ſwelling his volumes, and diſcovering his profound knowledge in obſerving what eſcapes the vulgar and ignorant.

The diſtinguiſhing between chance and cauſes muſt depend upon every particular man's ſagacity in conſidering every particular incident. But if I were to aſſign any general rule to help us in applying this diſtinction, it would be the following: *What depends upon a few perſons is in a great meaſure to be aſcribed to chance, or ſecret and unknown cauſes: What ariſes from a great number, may often be accounted for by determinate and known cauſes.*

Two natural reaſons may be aſſigned for this rule. *Firſt*, If you ſuppoſe a dye to have any bias, however ſmall, to a particular ſide, this bias, though perhaps it may not appear in a few throws, will certainly prevail in a great number, and will caſt the balance entirely to that ſide. In like manner, when any *cauſes* beget a particular inclination or paſſion, at a certain time and among a certain people, though many individuals may eſcape the contagion, and be ruled by paſſions peculiar to themſelves; yet the multitude will certainly be ſeized by the common affection, and be governed by it in all their actions.

Secondly, Thoſe principles or cauſes which are fitted to operate on a multitude, are always of a groſſer and more ſtubborn nature, leſs ſubject to accidents, and leſs influenced by whim and private fancy, than thoſe which operate on a few only. The latter are commonly ſo delicate and refined, that the ſmalleſt incident in the health, education, or fortune of a particular perſon, is ſufficient to divert their courſe and retard their operation; nor is it poſſible to reduce them to any general maxims or obſervations. Their influence at one time will never aſſure us concerning their influence at another, even though all the general circumſtances ſhould be the ſame in both caſes.

To judge by this rule, the domeſtic and the gradual revolutions of a ſtate muſt be a more proper ſubject of reaſoning and obſervation than the foreign and the violent, which are commonly produced by ſingle perſons, and are more influenced by whim, folly, or caprice, than by general paſſions and intereſts. The depreſſion of the lords, and riſe of the commons in ENGLAND, after the ſtatutes of alienation, and the increaſe of trade and induſtry, are more eaſily accounted for by general principles, than the depreſſion of the SPANISH and riſe of the FRENCH monarchy after the death of CHARLES QUINT. Had HARRY IV. CARDINAL RICHLIEU, and LOUIS XIV. been SPANIARDS, and PHILIP II. III. and IV.

IV. and Charles II. been Frenchmen, the history of these two nations had been entirely reversed.

For the same reason, it is more easy to account for the rise and progress of commerce in any kingdom than for that of learning; and a state which should apply itself to the encouragement of the one, would be more assured of success than one which should cultivate the other. Avarice, or the desire of gain, is an universal passion, which operates at all times, in all places, and upon all persons: but curiosity, or the love of knowledge, has a very limited influence, and requires youth, leisure, education, genius, and example, to make it govern any person. You will never want booksellers while there are buyers of books; but there may frequently be readers where there are no authors. Multitudes of people, necessity and liberty, have begotten commerce in Holland; but study and application have scarcely produced any eminent writers.

We may therefore conclude, that there is no subject in which we must proceed with more caution, than in tracing the history of the arts and sciences; lest we assign causes which never existed, and reduce what is merely contingent to stable and universal principles. Those who cultivate the sciences in any state are always few in number; the passion which governs them limited; their taste and judgment delicate, and easily perverted; and their application disturbed with the smallest accident. Chance therefore, or secret and unknown causes, must have a great influence on the rise and progress of all the refined arts.

But there is a reason which induces me not to ascribe the matter altogether to chance. Though the persons who cultivate the sciences, with such astonishing success as to attract the admiration of posterity, be always few, in all nations and all ages, it is impossible but a share of the same spirit and genius must be antecedently diffused throughout the people among whom they arise, in order to produce, form, and cultivate, from their earliest infancy, the taste and judgment of those eminent writers.

The mass cannot be altogether insipid from which such refined spirits are extracted. *There is a God within us*, says OVID, *who breathes that divine fire by which we are animated* *. Poets, in all ages, have advanced this claim to inspiration. There is not, however, any thing supernatural in the case. Their fire is not kindled from heaven: It only runs along the earth; is caught from one breast to another; and burns brightest where the materials are best prepared and most happily disposed. The question, therefore, concerning the rise and progress of the arts and sciences is not altogether a question concerning the taste, genius, and spirit of a few, but concerning those of a whole people; and may therefore be accounted for in some measure by general causes and principles. I grant that a man, who should inquire why such a particular poet, as HOMER for instance, existed at such a place, in such a time, would throw himself headlong into chimæra, and could never treat of such a subject without a multitude of false subtleties and refinements. He might as well pretend to give a reason why such particular generals as FABIUS and SCIPIO lived in ROME at such a time, and why FABIUS came into the world before SCIPIO. For such incidents as these, no other reason can be given than that of HORACE:

Scit genius, natale comes, qui temperat astrum,
Naturæ Deus humanæ, mortalis in unum——
——Quodque caput, vultu mutabilis, albus & ater.

But I am persuaded, that in many cases good reasons might be given why such a nation is more polite and learned, at a particular time, than any of its neighbours. At least this is so curious a subject, that it were a pity to abandon it entirely, before we have found whether it be susceptible of reasoning, and can be reduced to any general principles.

My first observation on this head is, *That it is impossible*

* Est Deus in nobis; agitante calescimus illo:
Impetus hic, sacræ semina mentis habet.
OVID. *Fast. lib.* i.

sible for the arts and sciences to arise at first among any people, unless that people enjoy the blessing of a free government.

In the first ages of the world, when men are as yet barbarous and ignorant, they seek no farther security against mutual violence and injustice than the choice of some rulers, few or many, in whom they place an implicit confidence, without providing any security, by laws or political institutions, against the violence and injustice of these rulers. If the authority be centered in a single person, and if the people, either by conquest or by the ordinary course of propagation, increase to a great multitude, the monarch, finding it impossible in his own person to execute every office of sovereignty in every place, must delegate his authority to inferior magistrates, who preserve peace and order in their respective districts. As experience and education have not yet refined the judgments of men to any considerable degree, the prince, who is himself unrestrained, never dreams of restraining his ministers, but delegates his full authority to every one whom he sets over any portion of the people. All general laws are attended with inconveniences when applied to particular cases; and it requires great penetration and experience, both to perceive that these inconveniences are fewer than what result from full discretionary powers in every magistrate, and also to discern what general laws are upon the whole attended with fewest inconveniences. This is a matter of so great difficulty, that men may have made some advances, even in the sublime arts of poetry and eloquence, where a rapidity of genius and imagination assists their progress, before they have arrived at any great refinement in their municipal laws, where frequent trials and diligent observation can alone direct their improvements. It is not therefore to be supposed, that a barbarous monarch, unrestrained and uninstructed, will ever become a legislator, or think of restraining his *Bashaws* in every province, or even his *Cadis* in every village. We are told, that the late *Czar*, though actuated with a noble

noble genius, and ſmit with the love and admiration of EUROPEAN arts; yet profeſſed an eſteem for the TURKISH policy in this particular, and approved of ſuch ſummary deciſions of cauſes as are practiſed in that barbarous monarchy, where the judges are not reſtrained by any methods, forms, or laws. He did not perceive how contrary ſuch a practice would have been to all his other endeavours for refining his people. Arbitrary power, in all caſes, is ſomewhat oppreſſive and debaſing; but it is altogether ruinous and intolerable when contracted into a ſmall compaſs; and becomes ſtill worſe, when the perſon who poſſeſſes it knows that the time of his authority is limited and uncertain. *Habet ſubjectos tanquam ſuos; viles, ut alienos**. He governs the ſubjects with full authority, as if they were his own; and with negligence or tyranny, as belonging to another. A people, governed after ſuch a manner, are ſlaves in the full and proper ſenſe of the word; and it is impoſſible they can ever aſpire to any refinements of taſte or reaſon. They dare not ſo much as pretend to enjoy the neceſſaries of life in plenty or ſecurity.

To expect, therefore, that the arts and ſciences ſhould take their firſt riſe in a monarchy, is to expect a contradiction. Before theſe refinements have taken place, the monarch is ignorant and uninſtructed; and not having knowledge ſufficient to make him ſenſible of the neceſſity of balancing his government upon general laws, he delegates his full power to all inferior magiſtrates. This barbarous policy debaſes the people, and for ever prevents all improvements. Were it poſſible that, before ſcience were known in the world, a monarch could poſſeſs ſo much wiſdom as to become a legiſlator, and govern his people by law, not by the arbitrary will of their fellow-ſubjects, it might be poſſible for that ſpecies of government to be the firſt nurſery of arts and ſciences. But that ſuppoſition ſeems ſcarcely to be conſiſtent or rational.

It may happen, that a republic, in its infant ſtate, may

* TACIT. hiſt. lib. i.

may be supported by as few laws as a barbarous monarchy, and may entruſt as unlimited an authority to its magiſtrates or judges. But, beſides that the frequent elections by the people are a conſiderable check upon authority, it is impoſſible but in time the neceſſity of reſtraining the magiſtrates, in order to preſerve liberty, muſt at laſt appear, and give riſe to general laws and ſtatutes. The Roman Conſuls, for ſome time, decided all cauſes without being confined by any poſitive ſtatutes, till the people, bearing this yoke with impatience, created the *decemvirs*, who promulgated the *twelve tables;* a body of laws, which, though perhaps they were not equal in bulk to one English act of parliament, were almoſt the only written rules which regulated property and puniſhment, for ſome ages, in that famous republic. They were, however, ſufficient, together with the forms of a free government, to ſecure the lives and properties of the citizens; to exempt one man from the dominion of another; and to protect every one againſt the violence or tyranny of his fellow-citizens. In ſuch a ſituation the ſciences may raiſe their heads and flouriſh: But never can have being amidſt ſuch a ſcene of oppreſſion and ſlavery as always reſults from barbarous monarchies, where the people alone are reſtrained by the authority of the magiſtrates, and the magiſtrates are not reſtrained by any law or ſtatute. An unlimited deſpotiſm of this nature, while it exiſts, effectually puts a ſtop to all improvements, and keeps men from attaining that knowledge which is requiſite to inſtruct them in the advantages ariſing from a better police and more moderate authority.

Here then are the advantages of free ſtates. Though a republic ſhould be barbarous, it neceſſarily, by an infallible operation, gives riſe to Law, even before mankind have made any conſiderable advances in the other ſciences. From law ariſes ſecurity; from ſecurity curioſity; and from curioſity knowledge. The latter ſteps of this progreſs may be more accidental; but the former are altogether neceſſary. A republic without laws can never

have any duration. On the contrary, in a monarchical government, law arises not necessarily from the forms of government. Monarchy, when absolute, contains even something repugnant to law. Great wisdom and reflection can alone reconcile them. But such a degree of wisdom can never be expected before the greater refinements and improvements of human reason. These refinements require curiosity, security, and law. The *first* growth, therefore, of the arts and sciences can never be expected in despotic governments.

There are other causes which discourage the rise of the refined arts in despotic governments; though I take the want of laws, and the delegation of full powers to every petty magistrate, to be the principal. Eloquence certainly springs up more naturally in popular governments: Emulation too, in every accomplishment, must there be more animated and enlivened; and genius and capacity have a fuller scope and career. All these causes render free governments the only proper *nursery* for the arts and sciences.

The next observation which I shall make on this head is, *That nothing is more favourable to the rise of politeness and learning, than a number of neighbouring and independent states, connected together by commerce and policy.* The emulation which naturally arises among those neighbouring states, is an obvious source of improvement: But what I would chiefly insist on is the stop which such limited territories give both to *power* and to *authority*.

Extended governments, where a single person has great influence, soon become absolute; but small ones change naturally into commonwealths. A large government is accustomed by degrees to tyranny; because each act of violence is at first performed upon a part, which, being distant from the majority, is not taken notice of, nor excites any violent ferment. Besides, a large government, though the whole be discontented, may by a little art be kept in obedience; while each part, ignorant of the resolutions of the rest, is afraid to begin any commotion

tion or insurrection. Not to mention, that there is a superstitious reverence for princes, which mankind naturally contract when they do not often see the sovereign, and when many of them become not acquainted with him so as to perceive his weaknesses. And as large states can afford a great expence, in order to support the pomp of majesty, this is a kind of fascination on men, and naturally contributes to the enslaving of them.

In a small government, any act of oppression is immediately known thoughout the whole: The murmurs and discontents proceeding from it are easily communicated: And the indignation arises the higher, because the subjects are not apt to apprehend, in such states, that the distance is very wide between themselves and their sovereign. "No man," said the prince of CONDE, "is a hero to "his *Valet de Chambre*." It is certain that admiration and acquaintance are altogether incompatible towards any mortal creature. Sleep and love convinced even ALEXANDER himself that he was not a God: But I suppose that such as daily attended him could easily, from the numberless weaknesses to which he was subject, have given him many still more convincing proofs of his humanity.

But the divisions into small states are favourable to learning, by stopping the progress of *authority* as well as that of *power*. Reputation is often as great a fascination upon men as sovereignty, and is equally destructive to the freedom of thought and examination. But where a number of neighbouring states have a great intercourse of arts and commerce, their mutual jealouly keeps them from receiving too lightly the law from each other, in matters of taste and of reasoning, and makes them examine every work of art with the greatest care and accuracy. The contagion of popular opinion spreads not so easily from one place to another. It readily receives a check in some state or other, where it concurs not with the prevailing prejudices. And nothing but nature and reason, or at least what bears them a strong resemblance,

can

can force its way through all obſtacles, and unite the moſt rival nations into an eſteem and admiration of it.

GREECE was a cluſter of little principalities which ſoon became republics; and being united, both by their near neighbourhood and by the ties of the ſame language and intereſt, they entered into the cloſeſt intercourſe of commerce and learning. There concurred a happy climate, a ſoil not unfertile, and a moſt harmonious and comprehenſive language; ſo that every circumſtance among that people ſeemed to favour the riſe of the arts and ſciences. Each city produced it ſeveral artiſts and philoſophers, who refuſed to yield the preference to thoſe of the neighbouring republics: Their contention and debates ſharpened the wits of men: A variety of objects was preſented to the judgment, while each challenged the preference to the reſt: and the ſciences, not being dwarfed by the reſtraint of authority, were enabled to make ſuch conſiderable ſhoots, as are, even at this time, the objects of our admiration. After the ROMAN *Chriſtian* or *Catholic* church had ſpread itſelf over the civilized world, and had engroſſed all the learning of the times, being really one large ſtate within itſelf, and united under one head; this variety of ſects immediately diſappeared, and the PERIPATETIC philoſophy was alone admitted into all the ſchools, to the utter depravation of every kind of learning. But mankind having at length thrown off this yoke, affairs are now returned nearly to the ſame ſituation as before, and EUROPE is at preſent a copy at large of what GREECE was formerly a pattern in miniature. We have ſeen the advantage of this ſituation in ſeveral inſtances. What checked the progreſs of the CARTESIAN philoſophy, to which the FRENCH nation ſhowed ſuch a ſtrong propenſity towards the end of the laſt century, but the oppoſition made to it by the other nations of EUROPE, who ſoon diſcovered the weak ſides of that philoſophy? The ſevereſt ſcrutiny which NEWTON's theory has undergone, proceeded not from his own countrymen, but from foreigners; and if it can overcome the obſtacles which it meets

meets with at preſent in all parts of EUROPE, it will probably go down triumphant to the lateſt poſterity. The ENGLISH are become ſenſible of the ſcandalous licentiouſneſs of their ſtage, from the example of the FRENCH decency and morals. The FRENCH are convinced, that their theatre has become ſomewhat effeminate by too much love and gallantry; and begin to approve of the more maſculine taſte of ſome neighbouring nations.

In CHINA, there ſeems to be a pretty conſiderable ſtock of politeneſs and ſcience; which, in the courſe of ſo many centuries, might naturally be expected to ripen into ſomething more perfect and finiſhed than what has yet ariſen from them. But CHINA is one vaſt empire, ſpeaking one language, governed by one law, and ſympathiſing in the ſame manners. The authority of any teacher, ſuch as CONFUCIUS, was propagated eaſily from one corner of the empire to the other. None had courage to reſiſt the torrent of popular opinion. And poſterity was not bold enough to diſpute what had been univerſally received by their anceſtors. This ſeems to be one natural reaſon why the ſciences have made ſo ſlow a progreſs in that mighty empire*.

If we conſider the face of the globe, EUROPE, of all the four parts of the world, is the moſt broken by ſeas, rivers, and mountains; and GREECE of all countries of EUROPE. Hence theſe regions were naturally divided into ſeveral diſtinct governments. And hence the ſciences aroſe in GREECE; and EUROPE has been hitherto the moſt conſtant habitation of them.

I have ſometimes been inclined to think, that interruptions in the periods of learning, were they not attended with ſuch a deſtruction of ancient books and the records of hiſtory, would be rather favourable to the arts and ſciences, by breaking the progreſs of authority, and dethroning the tyrannical uſurpers over human reaſon. In this particular, they have the ſame influence as interruptions in political governments and ſocieties. Conſider the

* See NOTE [E].

the blind submission of the ancient philosophers to the several masters in each school, and you will be convinced, that little good could be expected from a hundred centuries of such a servile philosophy. Even the ECLECTICS, who arose about the age of AUGUSTUS, notwithstanding their professing to choose freely what pleased them from every different sect, were yet, in the main, as slavish and dependant as any of their brethern; since they sought for truth, not in nature, but in the several schools; where they supposed she must necessarily be found, though not united in a body, yet dispersed in parts. Upon the revival of learning, those sects of STOICS and EPICUREANS, PLATONISTS and PYTHAGORICIANS, could never regain any credit or authority; and, at the same time, by the example of their fall, kept men from submitting, with such blind deference, to those new sects which have attempted to gain an ascendant over them.

The *third* observation which I shall form on this head, of the rise and progress of the arts and sciences, is, *That though the only proper* Nursery *of these noble plants be a free state, yet may they be transplanted into any government; and that a republic is most favourable to the growth of the sciences; a civilized monarchy to that of the polite arts.*

To balance a large state or society, whether monarchical or republican, on general laws, is a work of so great difficulty, that no human genius, however comprehensive, is able, by the mere dint of reason and reflection, to effect it. The judgments of many must unite in this work: Experience must guide their labour; time must bring it to perfection; and the feeling of inconveniences must correct the mistakes which they inevitably fall into in their first trials and experiments. Hence appears the impossibility, that this undertaking should be begun and carried on in any monarchy; since such a form of government, ere civilized, knows no other secret or policy, than that of entrusting unlimited powers to every governor or magistrate, and subdividing the people into so many classes and orders of slavery. From such a situ-

ation, no improvement can ever be expected in the sciences, in the liberal arts, in laws, and scarcely in the manual arts and manufactures. The same barbarism and ignorance, with which the government commences, is propagated to all posterity, and can never come to a period by the efforts or ingenuity of such unhappy slaves.

But though law, the source of all security and happiness, arises late in any government, and is the slow product of order and of liberty, it is not preserved with the same difficulty with which it is produced; but when it has once taken root, is a hardy plant, which will scarcely ever perish through the ill culture of men, or the rigour of the seasons. The arts of luxury, and much more the liberal arts, which depend on a refined taste or sentiment, are easily lost; because they are always relished by a few only, whose leisure, fortune, and genius fit them for such amusements. But what is profitable to every mortal, and in common life, when once discovered, can scarcely fall into oblivion, but by the total subversion of society, and by such furious inundations of barbarous invaders, as obliterate all memory of former arts and civility. Imitation also is apt to transport these coarser and more useful arts from one climate to another, and make them precede the refined arts in their progress; though perhaps they sprang after them in their first rise and propagation. From these causes proceed civilized monarchies; where the arts of government, first invented in free states, are preserved to the mutual advantage and security of sovereign and subject.

However perfect, therefore, the monarchical form may appear to some politicians, it owes all its perfection to the republican; nor is it possible, that a pure despotism, established among a barbarous people, can ever, by its native force and energy, refine and polish itself. It must borrow its laws, and methods, and institutions, and consequently its stability and order, from free governments. These advantages are the sole growth of republics. The

extenſive deſpotiſm of a barbarous monarchy, by entering into the detail of the government, as well as into the principal points of adminiſtration, for ever prevents all ſuch improvements.

In a civilized monarchy, the prince alone is unreſtrained in the exerciſe of his authority, and poſſeſſes alone a power, which is not bounded by any thing but cuſtom, example, and the ſenſe of his own intereſt. Every miniſter or magiſtrate, however eminent, muſt ſubmit to the general laws which govern the whole ſociety, and muſt exert the authority delegated to him after the manner which is preſcribed. The people depend on none but their ſovereign for the ſecurity of their property. He is ſo far removed from them, and is ſo much exempt from private jealouſies or intereſts, that this dependence is ſcarcely felt. And thus a ſpecies of government ariſes, to which, in a high political rant, we may give the name of *Tyranny;* but which, by a juſt and prudent adminiſtration, may afford tolerable ſecurity to the people, and may anſwer moſt of the ends of political ſociety.

But though in a civilized monarchy, as well as in a republic, the people have ſecurity for the enjoyment of their property; yet in both theſe forms of government, thoſe who poſſeſs the ſupreme authority have the diſpoſal of many honours and advantages, which excite the ambition and avarice of mankind. The only difference is, that in a republic, the candidates for office muſt look downwards, to gain the ſuffrages of the people; in a monarchy, they muſt turn their attention upwards, to court the good graces and favour of the great. To be ſucceſsful in the former way, it is neceſſary for a man to make himſelf *uſeful*, by his induſtry, capacity, or knowledge: To be proſperous in the latter way, it is requiſite for him to render himſelf *agreeable*, by his wit, complaiſance, or civility. A ſtrong genius ſucceeds beſt in republics: A refined taſte in monarchies. And, conſequently, the ſciences are the more natural growth of the one, and the polite arts of the other.

Not

Not to mention, that monarchies, receiving their chief ſtability from a ſuperſtitious reverence to prieſts and princes, have commonly abridged the liberty of reaſoning, with regard to religion and politics, and conſequently metaphyſics and morals. All theſe form the moſt conſiderable branches of ſcience. Mathematics and natural philoſophy, which only remain, are not half ſo valuable.

Among the arts of converſation, no one pleaſes more than mutual deference or civility, which leads us to reſign our own inclinations to thoſe of our companion, and to curb and conceal that preſumption and arrogance, ſo natural to the human mind. A good-natured man, who is well educated, practiſes this civility to every mortal, without premeditation or intereſt. But in order to render that valuable quality general among any people, it ſeems neceſſary to aſſiſt the natural diſpoſition by ſome general motive. Where power riſes upwards from the people to the great, as in all republics, ſuch refinements of civility are apt to be little practiſed; ſince the whole ſtate is, by that means, brought near to a level, and every member of it is rendered, in a great meaſure, independent of another. The people have the advantage, by the authority of their ſufferages: The great, by the ſuperiority of their ſtation. But in a civilized monarchy, there is a long train of dependence from the prince to the peaſant; which is not great enough to render property precarious, or depreſs the minds of the people, but is ſufficient to beget in every one an inclination to pleaſe his ſuperiors, and to form himſelf upon thoſe models which are moſt acceptable to people of condition and education. Politeneſs of manners, therefore, ariſes moſt naturally in monarchies and courts; and where that flouriſhes, none of the liberal arts will be altogether neglected or deſpiſed.

The republics in EUROPE are at preſent noted for want of politeneſs. *The good-manners of a* SWISS *civilized in* HOLLAND *, is an expreſſion for ruſticity among the

* C'eſt la politeſſe d'un SUISSE En HOLLANDE civiliſé. ROUSSEAU.

FRENCH. The ENGLISH, in some degree, fall under the same censure, notwithstanding their learning and genius. And if the VENETIANS be an exception to the rule, they owe it, perhaps, to their communication with the other ITALIANS, most of whose governments beget a dependence more than sufficient for civilizing their manners.

It is difficult to pronounce any judgment concerning the refinements of the ancient republics in this particular. But I am apt to suspect, that the arts of conversation were not brought so near to perfection among them as the arts of writing and composition. The scurrility of the ancient orators, in many instances, is quite shocking, and exceeds all belief. Vanity too is often not a little offensive in authors of those ages*; as well as the common licentiousness and immodesty of their style, *Quicunque impudicus, adulter, ganeo, manu, ventre*, pene, *bona patria laceraverat*, says SALLUST in one of the gravest and most moral passages of his history. *Nam fuit ante Helenam Cunnus, teterrima belli causa*, is an expression of HORACE, in tracing the origin of moral good and evil. OVID and LUCRETIUS† are almost as licentious in their style as Lord ROCHESTER; though the former were fine gentlemen and delicate writers, and the latter, from the corruptions of that court in which he lived, seems to have thrown off all regard to shame and decency. JUVENAL inculcates modesty with great zeal; but sets a very bad example of it, if we consider the impudence of his expressions.

I shall also be bold to affirm, that among the ancients, there was not much delicacy of breeding, or that politic de-

* It is needless to cite CICERO or PLINY on this head; they are too much noted: But one is a little surprised to find ARRIAN, a very grave, judicious writer, interrupt the thread of his narration all of a sudden, to tell his readers, that he himself is as eminent among the GREEKS for eloquence as ALEXANDER was for arms. Lib. i.

† This poet (See lib iv. 1165.) recommends a very extraordinary cure for love, and what one expects not to meet with in so elegant and philosophical a poem. It seems to have been the original of some of Dr SWIFT's images. The elegant CATULLUS and PHÆDRUS fall under the same censure.

deference and reſpect, which civility obliges us either to expreſs or counterfeit towards the perſons with whom we converſe. CICERO was certainly one of the fineſt gentlemen of his age; yet I muſt confeſs I have frequently been ſhocked with the poor figure under which he repreſents his friend ATTICUS, in thoſe dialogues, where he himſelf is introduced as a ſpeaker. That learned and virtuous ROMAN, whoſe dignity, though he was only a private gentleman, was inferior to that of no one in ROME, is there ſhown in rather a more pitiful light than PHILALETHES's friend in our modern dialogues. He is a humble admirer of the orator, pays him frequent compliments, and receives his inſtructions, with all the deference which a ſcholar owes to his maſter *. Even CATO is treated in ſomewhat of a cavalier manner in the dialogues *De Finibus*.

One of the moſt particular details of a real dialogue which we meet with in antiquity, is related by POLYBIUS†; when PHILIP king of MACEDON, a prince of wit and parts, met with TITUS FLAMININUS, one of the politeſt of the ROMANS, as we learn from PLUTARCH‡, accompanied with ambaſſadors from almoſt all the GREEK cities. The ÆTOLIAN ambaſſador very abruptly tells the king, that he talked like a fool or a madman (λῆρεῖν). *That's evident*, ſays his majeſty, *even to a blind man;* which was a raillery on the blindneſs of his excellency. Yet all this did not paſs the uſual bounds: For the conference was not diſturbed; and FLAMININUS was very well diverted with theſe ſtrokes of humour. At the end, when PHILIP craved a little time to conſult with his friends, of whom he had none preſent, the ROMAN general, being deſirous alſo to ſhow his wit, as the hiſtorian ſays, tells him, *That perhaps the reaſon why he had none of his friends with him, was becauſe he had murdered them all;* which was actually the caſe. This unprovoked piece of

* ATT. Non mihi videtur ad beate vivendum ſatis eſſe virtûtem. MAR. At hercule BRUTO meo videtur; cujus ego judicium, pace tua dixerim, longè antepono tuo. TUSC. Quæſt. lib. v.

† Lib. xvii. ‡ In vita FLAMIN.

ruſticity is not condemned by the hiſtorian; cauſed no farther reſentment in PHILIP, than to excite a SARDONIAN ſmile, or what we call a grin; and hindered him not from renewing the conference next day. PLUTARCH* too mentions this raillery amongſt the witty and agreeable ſayings of FLAMININUS.

Cardinal WOLSEY apologized for his famous piece of inſolence, in ſaying, EGO ET REX MEUS, *I and my king*, by obſerving, that this expreſſion was conformable to the *Latin* idiom, and that a ROMAN always named himſelf before the perſon to whom, or of whom, he ſpake. Yet this ſeems to have been an inſtance of want of civility among that people. The ancients made it a rule, that the perſon of the greateſt dignity ſhould be mentioned firſt in the diſcourſe; inſomuch, that we find the ſpring of a quarrel and jealouſy between the ROMANS and ÆTOLIANS to have been a poet's naming the ÆTOLIANS before the ROMANS, in celebrating a victory gained by their united arms over the MACEDONIANS†. Thus LIVIA diſguſted TIBERIUS by placing her own name before his in an inſcription ‡.

No advantages in this world are pure and unmixed. In like manner, as modern politeneſs, which is naturally ſo ornamental, runs often into affectation and foppery, diſguiſe and inſincerity; ſo the ancient ſimplicity, which is naturally ſo amiable and affecting, often degenerates into ruſticity and abuſe, ſcurrility and obſcenity.

If the ſuperiority in politeneſs ſhould be allowed to modern times, the modern notions of *gallantry*, the natural produce of courts and monarchies, will probably be aſſigned as the cauſes of this refinement. No one denies this invention to be modern §: But ſome of the more zealous partizans of the ancients have aſſerted it to be foppiſh and ridiculous, and a reproach rather than

a

* PLUT. in vita FLAMIN. † Ibid.

‡ TACIT. Ann. lib. iii. cap. 64.

§ In the *Self-Tormentor* of TERENCE, CLINIAS, whenever he comes to town, inſtead of waiting on his miſtreſs, ſends for her to come to him.

a credit to the present age *. It may here be proper to examine this question.

Nature has implanted in all living creatures an affection between the sexes, which, even in the fiercest and most rapacious animals, is not merely confined to the satisfaction of the bodily appetite, but begets a friendship and mutual sympathy, which runs through the whole tenor of their lives. Nay, even in those species where nature limits the indulgence of this appetite to one season and to one object, and forms a kind of marriage or association between a single male and female, there is yet a visible complacency and benevolence which extends farther, and mutually softens the affections of the sexes towards each other. How much more must this have place in man, where the confinement of the appetite is not natural; but either is derived accidentally from some strong charm of love, or arises from reflections on duty and convenience? Nothing, therefore, can proceed less from affectation than the passion of gallantry. It is *natural* in the highest degree. Art and education, in the most elegant courts, make no more alteration on it than on all the other laudable passions. They only turn the mind more towards it; they refine it; they polish it; and give it a proper grace and expression.

But gallantry is as *generous* as it is *natural*. To correct such gross vices as lead us to commit real injury on others, is the part of morals, and the object of the most ordinary education. Where *that* is not attended to in some degree, no human society can subsist. But in order to render conversation, and the intercourse of minds, more easy and agreeable, good-manners have been invented, and have carried the matter somewhat farther. Wherever nature has given the mind a propensity to any vice, or to any passion disagreeable to others, refined breeding has taught men to throw the bias on the opposite side, and to preserve, in all their behaviour, the appearance of sentiments different from those to which they naturally incline. Thus, as we are commonly proud and selfish,

* Lord Shaftesbury, see his *Moralists*.

and apt to assume the preference above others, a polite man learns to behave with deference towards his companions, and to yield the superiority to them in all the common incidents of society. In like manner, wherever a person's situation may naturally beget any disagreeable suspicion in him, it is the part of good-manners to prevent it, by a studied display of sentiments directly contrary to those of which he is apt to be jealous. Thus, old men know their infirmities, and naturally dread contempt from the youth: Hence, well-educated youth redouble the instances of respect and deference to their elders. Strangers and foreigners are without protection: Hence, in all polite countries, they receive the highest civilities, and are intitled to the first place in every company. A man is lord in his own family, and his guests are, in a manner, subject to his authority: Hence he is always the lowest person in the company; attentive to the wants of every one; and giving himself all the trouble, in order to please, which may not betray too visible an affectation, or impose too much constraint on his guests*. Gallantry is nothing but an instance of the same generous attention. As nature has given *man* the superiority above *woman*, by endowing him with greater strength both of mind and body; it is his part to alleviate that superiority as much as possible, by the generosity of his behaviour, and by a studied deference and complaisance for all her inclinations and opinions. Barbarous nations display this superiority, by reducing their females to the most abject slavery; by confining them, by beating them, by selling them, by killing them. But the male sex, among a polite people, discover their authority in a more generous, though not a less evident manner; by civility, by respect, by complaisance, and, in a word, by gallantry.

In

* The frequent mention in ancient authors of that ill-bred custom of the master of the family's eating better bread or drinking better wine at table than he afforded his guests, is but an indifferent mark of the civility of those ages. See JUVENAL, sat. 5. PLINII lib. xiv. cap. 13. Also PLINII *Epist. Lucan de mercede conductis, Saturnalia*, &c. There is scarcely any part of EUROPE at present so uncivilized as to admit of such a custom.

In good company, you need not ask, Who is the master of the feast? The man who sits in the lowest place, and who is always industrious in helping every one, is certainly the person. We must either condemn all such instances of generosity as foppish and affected, or admit of gallantry among the rest. The ancient Muscovites wedded their wives with a whip instead of a ring. The same people, in their own houses, took always the precedency above foreigners, even * foreign ambassadors. These two instances of their generosity and politeness are much of a piece.

Gallantry is not less compatible with *wisdom* and *prudence* than with *nature* and *generosity;* and when under proper regulations, contributes more than any other invention to the *entertainment* and *improvement* of the youth of both sexes. Among every species of animals, nature has founded on the love between the sexes their sweetest and best enjoyment. But the satisfaction of the bodily appetite is not alone sufficient to gratify the mind; and even among brute creatures, we find, that their play and dalliance, and other expressions of fondness, form the greatest part of the entertainment. In rational beings, we must certainly admit the mind for a considerable share. Were we to rob the feast of all its garniture of reason, discourse, sympathy, friendship, and gaiety, what remains would scarcely be worth acceptance, in the judgement of the truly elegant and luxurious.

What better school for manners than the company of virtuous women; where the mutual endeavour to please must insensibly polish the mind, where the example of the female softness and modesty must communicate itself to their admirers, and where the delicacy of that sex puts every one on his guard, lest he give offence by any breach of decency?

Among the ancients, the character of the fair-sex was considered as altogether domestic; nor were they regarded as part of the polite world, or of good company. This, perhaps, is the true reason why the ancients have not left us

* See *Relation of three Embassies*, by the Earl of Carlisle.

us one piece of pleasantry that is excellent (unless one may except the banquet of XENOPHON and the Dialogues of LUCIAN), though many of their serious compositions are altogether inimitable. HORACE condemns the coarse railleries and cold jests of PLAUTUS: But, though the most easy, agreeable, and judicious writer in the world, is his own talent for ridicule very striking or refined! This, therefore, is one considerable improvement which the polite arts have received from gallantry and from courts, where it first arose.

But, to return from this digression, I shall advance it as a *fourth* observation on this subject, of the rise and progress of the arts and sciences, *That when the arts and sciences come to perfection in any state, from that moment they naturally or rather necessarily decline, and seldom or never revive in that nation where they formerly flourished.*

It must be confessed, that this maxim, though conformable to experience, may at first sight be esteemed contrary to reason. If the natural genius of mankind be the same in all ages, and in almost all countries (as seems to be the truth), it must very much forward and cultivate this genius, to be possessed of patterns in every art, which may regulate the taste and fix the objects of imitation. The models left us by the ancients gave birth to all the arts about 200 years ago, and have mightily advanced their progress in every country of EUROPE: Why had they not a like effect during the reign of TRAJAN and his successors, when they were much more entire, and were still admired and studied by the whole world? So late as the emperor JUSTINIAN, the POET, by way of distinction, was understood, among the GREEKS, to be HOMER; among the ROMANS, VIRGIL. Such admiration still remained for these divine geniuses, though no poet had appeared for many centuries, who could justly pretend to have imitated them.

A man's genius is always, in the beginning of life, as much unknown to himself as to others; and it is only after frequent trials, attended with success, that he dares think himself equal to those undertakings, in which

which thoſe who have ſucceeded have fixed the admiration of mankind. If his own nation be already poſſeſſed of many models of eloquence, he naturally compares his own juvenile exerciſes with theſe; and being ſenſible of the great diſproportion, is diſcouraged from any farther attempts, and never aims at a rivalſhip with thoſe authors whom he ſo much admires. A noble emulation is the ſource of every excellence. Admiration and modeſty naturally extinguiſh this emulation. And no one is ſo liable to an exceſs of admiration and modeſty as a truly great genius.

Next to emulation, the greateſt encourager of the noble arts is praiſe and glory. A writer is animated with new force when he hears the applauſes of the world for his former productions; and being roufed by ſuch a motive, he often reaches a pitch of perfection which is equally ſurpriſing to himſelf and to his readers. But when the poſts of honour are all occupied, his firſt attempts are but coldly received by the public; being compared to productions which are both in themſelves more excellent, and have already the advantage of an eſtabliſhed reputation. Were Moliere and Corneille to bring upon the ſtage at preſent their early productions, which were formerly ſo well received, it would diſcourage the young poets to ſee the indifference and diſdain of the public. The ignorance of the age alone could have given admiſſion to the *Prince of* Tyre; but it is to that we owe *the Moor:* Had *Every man in his Humour* been rejected, we had never ſeen Volpone.

Perhaps it may not be for the advantage of any nation to have the arts imported from their neighbours in too great perfection. This extinguiſhes emulation, and ſinks the ardour of the generous youth. So many models of Italian painting brought into England, inſtead of exciting our artiſts, is the cauſe of their ſmall progreſs in that noble art. The ſame perhaps was the caſe of Rome when it received the arts from Greece. That multitude of polite productions in the French language, diſperſed all over Germany and the North, hinder theſe

these nations from cultivating their own language, and keep them still dependent on their neighbours for those elegant entertainments.

It is true, the ancients had left us models in every kind of writing, which are highly worthy of admiration. But besides that they were written in languages known only to the learned; besides this, I say, the comparison is not so perfect or entire between modern wits and those who lived in so remote an age. Had WALLER been born in ROME during the reign of TIBERIUS, his first productions had been despised, when compared to the finished odes of HORACE. But, in this island, the superiority of the ROMAN poet diminished nothing from the fame of the ENGLISH. We esteemed ourselves sufficiently happy that our climate and language could produce but a faint copy of so excellent an original.

In short, the arts and sciences, like some plants, require a fresh soil; and however rich the land may be, and however you may recruit it by art or care, it will never, when once exhausted, produce any thing that is perfect or finished in the kind.

ESSAY XV.

The EPICUREAN *.

IT is a great mortification to the vanity of man, that his utmost art and industry can never equal the meanest

* Or, *The man of elegance and pleasure.* The intention of this and the three following Essays is not so much to explain accurately the sentiments of the ancient sects of philosophy, as to deliver the sentiments of sects that naturally form themselves in the world, and entertain different ideas of human life and of happiness. I have given each of them the name of the philosophical sect to which it bears the greatest affinity.

meaneſt of nature's productions, either for beauty or value. Art is only the under-workman, and is employed to give a few ſtrokes of embelliſhment to thoſe pieces which come from the hand of the maſter. Some of the drapery may be of his drawing, but he is not allowed to touch the principal figure. Art may make a ſuit of clothes; but nature muſt produce a man.

Even in thoſe productions, commonly denominated works of art, we find that the nobleſt of the kind are beholden for their chief beauty to the force and happy influence of nature. To the native enthuſiaſm of the poets, we owe whatever is admirable in their productions. The greateſt genius, where nature at any time fails him (for ſhe is not equal), throws aſide the lyre, and hopes not, from the rules of art, to reach that divine harmony which muſt proceed from her inſpiration alone. How poor are thoſe ſongs, where a happy flow of fancy has not furniſhed materials for art to embelliſh and refine!

But of all the fruitleſs attempts of art, no one is ſo ridiculous as that which the ſevere philoſophers have undertaken, the producing of an *artificial happineſs*, and making us be pleaſed by rules of reaſon and by reflection. Why did none of them claim the reward which XERXES promiſed to him who ſhould invent a new pleaſure? Unleſs, perhaps, they invented ſo many pleaſures for their own uſe, that they deſpiſed riches, and ſtood in no need of any enjoyments which the rewards of that monarch could procure them. I am apt, indeed, to think, that they were not willing to furniſh the PERSIAN court with a new pleaſure, by preſenting it with ſo new and unuſual an object of ridicule. Their ſpeculations, when confined to theory, and gravely delivered in the ſchools of GREECE, might excite admiration in their ignorant pupils: But the attempting to reduce ſuch principles to practice would ſoon have betrayed their abſurdity.

You pretend to make me happy by reaſon, and by rules of art. You muſt, then, create me anew by rules of art. For on my original frame and ſtructure does

my happineſs depend. But you want power to effect this; and ſkill too, I am afraid: Nor can I entertain a leſs opinion of nature's wiſdom than of yours. And let her conduct the machine which ſhe has ſo wiſely framed. I find, that I ſhould only ſpoil it by my tampering.

To what purpoſe ſhould I pretend to regulate, refine, or invigorate any of thoſe ſprings or principles which nature has implanted in me? Is this the road by which I muſt reach happineſs? But happineſs implies eaſe, contentment, repoſe, and pleaſure; not watchfulneſs, care, and fatigue. The health of my body conſiſts in the facility with which all its operations are performed. The ſtomach digeſts the aliments; the heart circulates the blood; the brain ſeparates and refines the ſpirits; and all this without my concerning myſelf in the matter. When by my will alone I can ſtop the blood as it runs with impetuoſity along its canals, then may I hope to change the courſe of my ſentiments and paſſions. In vain ſhould I ſtrain my faculties, and endeavour to receive pleaſure from an object which is not fitted by nature to affect my organs with delight. I may give myſelf pain by my fruitleſs endeavours, but ſhall never reach any pleaſure.

Away, then, with all thoſe vain pretences of making ourſelves happy within ourſelves, of feaſting on our own thoughts, of being ſatisfied with the conſciouſneſs of well-doing, and of deſpiſing all aſſiſtance and all ſupplies from external objects. This is the voice of PRIDE, not of NATURE. And it were well, if even this pride could ſupport itſelf, and communicate a real *inward* pleaſure, however melancholy or ſevere. But this impotent pride can do no more than regulate the *outſide;* and with infinite pains and attention compoſe the language and countenance to a philoſophical dignity, in order to deceive the ignorant vulgar. The heart, mean while, is empty of all enjoyment; and the mind, unſupported by its proper objects, ſinks into the deepeſt ſorrow and dejection. Miſerable, but vain mortal! Thy mind be happy within itſelf! With what reſources is it endowed to fill

ſo immenſe a void, and ſupply the place of all thy bodily ſenſes and faculties? Can thy head ſubſiſt without thy other members? In ſuch a ſituation,

What fooliſh figure muſt it make?
Do nothing elſe but ſleep *and* ake.

Into ſuch a lethargy or ſuch a melancholy muſt thy mind be plunged when deprived of foreign occupations and enjoyments.

Keep me therefore no longer in this violent conſtraint. Confine me not within myſelf; but point out to me thoſe objects and pleaſures which afford the chief enjoyment. But why do I apply to you, proud and ignorant ſages, to ſhow me the road to happineſs? Let me conſult my own paſſions and inclinations. In them muſt I read the dictates of nature, not in your frivolous diſcourſes.

But ſee, propitious to my wiſhes, the divine, the amiable PLEASURE *, the ſupreme love of GODS and men, advances towards me. At her approach, my heart beats with genial heat, and every ſenſe and every faculty is diſſolved in joy; while ſhe pours around me all the embelliſhments of the ſpring and all the treaſures of the autumn. The melody of her voice charms my ears with the ſofteſt muſic, as ſhe invites me to partake of thoſe delicious fruits which, with a ſmile that diffuſes a glory on the heavens and the earth, ſhe preſents to me. The ſportive CUPIDS who attend her, or fan me with their odoriferous wings, or pour on my head the moſt fragrant oils, or offer me their ſparkling nectar in golden goblets. O! for ever let me ſpread my limbs on this bed of roſes, and thus, thus feel the delicious moments, with ſoft and downy ſteps, glide along. But, cruel chance! whither do you fly ſo faſt? Why do my ardent wiſhes, and that load of pleaſures under which you labour, rather haſten than retard your unrelenting pace? Suffer me to enjoy this ſoft repoſe, after all my fatigues in ſearch of happineſs. Suffer me to ſatiate myſelf with theſe

* *Dia Voluptas.* LUCRET.

these delicacies, after the pains of so long and so foolish an abstinence.

But it will not do. The roses have lost their hue; the fruit its flavour: And that delicious wine, whose fumes, so late, intoxicated all my senses with such delight, now solicits in vain the fated palate. *Pleasure* smiles at my languor. She beckons her sister, *Virtue*, to come to her assistance. The gay, the frolic *Virtue* observes the call, and brings along the whole troop of my jovial friends. Welcome, thrice welcome, my ever dear companions, to these shady bowers, and to this luxurious repast. Your presence has restored to the rose its hue, and to the fruit its flavour. The vapours of this sprightly nectar now again play around my heart; while you partake of my delights, and discover, in your cheerful looks, the pleasure which you receive from my happiness and satisfaction. The like do I receive from yours; and encouraged by your joyous presence, shall again renew the feast, with which, from too much enjoyment, my senses were well nigh fated; while the mind kept not pace with the body, nor afforded relief to her o'er burthened partner.

In our cheerful discourses, better than in the formal reasonings of the schools, is true wisdom to be found. In our friendly endearments, better than in the hollow debates of statesmen and pretended patriots, does true virtue display itself. Forgetful of the past, secure of the future, let us here enjoy the present; and while we yet possess a being, let us fix some good, beyond the power of fate or fortune. To-morrow will bring its own pleasures along with it: Or should it disappoint our fond wishes, we shall at least enjoy the pleasure of reflecting on the pleasures of to-day.

Fear not, my friends, that the barbarous dissonance of BACCHUS, and of his revellers, should break in upon this entertainment, and confound us with their turbulent and clamorous pleasures. The sprightly muses wait around; and with their charming symphony, sufficient to soften the wolves and tygers of the savage desert, inspire

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a ſoft joy into every boſom. Peace, harmony, and concord reign in this retreat; nor is the ſilence ever broken but by the muſic of our ſongs, or the cheerful accents of our friendly voices.

But hark! the favourite of the muſes, the gentle DAMON, ſtrikes the lyre; and while he accompanies its harmonious notes with his more harmonious ſong, he inſpires us with the ſame happy debauch of fancy by which he is himſelf tranſported. "ye happy youth," he ſings, "ye favoured of heaven*, while the wanton "ſpring pours upon you all her blooming honours, let "not *glory* ſeduce you, with her deluſive blaze, to paſs "in perils and dangers this delicious ſeaſon, this prime "of life. Wiſdom points out to you the road to plea-"ſure: Nature too beckons you to follow her in that "ſmooth and flowery path. Will you ſhut your ears to "their commanding voice? Will you harden your heart "to their ſoft allurements? Oh, deluded mortals! thus "to loſe your youth, thus to throw away ſo invaluable a "preſent, to trifle with ſo pariſhing a bleſſing. Con-"template well your recompence. Conſider that glory "which ſo allures your proud hearts, and ſeduces you "with your own praiſes. It is an echo, a dream, nay "the ſhadow of a dream, diſſipated by every wind, and "loſt by every contrary breath of the ignorant and ill-"judging multitude. You fear not that even death it-"ſelf ſhall raviſh it from you. But behold! while you "are yet alive, calumny bereaves you of it; ignorance "neglects it; nature enjoys it not; fancy alone, re-"nouncing every pleaſure, receives this airy recom-"pence, empty and unſtable as herſelf."

Thus the hours paſs unperceived along, and lead in their wanton train all the pleaſures of ſenſe, and all the joys of harmony and friendſhip. Smiling *innocence* cloſes the proceſſion; and while ſhe preſents herſelf to our

* An imitation of the SYRENS ſong in TASSO:
"O Giovinetti, mentre APRILE & MAGGIO
"V'ammantan di fiorité & verde ſpoglie," &c.
Gieruſalemme liberata, *Canto* 14.

raviſhed eyes, ſhe embelliſhes the whole ſcene, and renders the view of theſe pleaſures as tranſporting, after they have paſt us, as when, with laughing countenances, they were yet advancing towards us.

But the ſun has ſunk below the horizon; and darkneſs, ſtealing ſilently upon us, has now buried all nature in an univerſal ſhade. "Rejoice, my friends; continue "your repaſt, or change it for ſoft repoſe. Though "abſent, your joy or your tranquillity ſhall ſtill be "mine." *But whither do you go? Or what new pleaſures call you from our ſociety? Is their aught agreeable without your friends? And can aught pleaſe, in which we partake not?* "Yes, my friends; the joy which I now ſeek "admits not of your participation. Here alone I wiſh "your abſence; and here alone can I find a ſufficient "compenſation for the loſs of your ſociety."

But I have not advanced far through the ſhades of the thick wood, which ſpreads a double night around me, ere, methinks, I perceive through the gloom the charming CÆLIA, the miſtreſs of my wiſhes, who wanders impatient through the grove, and, preventing the appointed hour, ſilently chides my tardy ſteps. But the joy which ſhe receives from my preſence beſt pleads my excuſe; and, diſſipating every anxious and every angry thought, leaves room for nought but mutual joy and rapture. With what words, my fair one, ſhall I expreſs my tenderneſs, or deſcribe the emotions which now warm my tranſported boſom! Words are too faint to deſcribe my love; and if, alas! you feel not the ſame flame within you, in vain ſhall I endeavour to convey to you a juſt conception of it. But your every word and every motion ſuffice to remove this doubt; and, while they expreſs your paſſion, ſerve alſo to enflame mine. How amiable this ſolitude, this ſilence, this darkneſs! No objects now importune the raviſhed ſoul. The thought, the ſenſe, all full of nothing but our mutual happineſs, wholly poſſeſs the mind, and convey a pleaſure, which deluded mortals vainly ſeek for in every other enjoyment.——

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But why does your bosom heave with these sighs, while tears bathe your glowing cheeks? Why distract your heart with such vain anxieties? Why so often ask me, *How long my love shall yet endure?* Alas! my CÆLIA, can I resolve this question? *Do I know how long my life shall yet endure?* But does this also disturb your tender breast? And is the image of our frail mortality for ever present with you, to throw a damp on your gayest hours, and poison even those joys which love inspires? Consider rather, that if life be frail, if youth be transitory, we should well employ the present moment, and lose no part of so perishable an existence. Yet a little moment, and *these* shall be no more; we shall be as if we had never been; not a memory of us be left upon earth; and even the fabulous shades below will not afford us a habitation. Our fruitless anxieties, our vain projects, our uncertain speculations, shall all be swallowed up and lost. Our present doubts, concerning the original cause of all things, must never, alas! be resolved. This alone we may be certain of, that if any governing mind preside, he must be pleased to see us fulfil the ends of our being, and enjoy that pleasure for which alone we were created. Let this reflection give ease to your anxious thoughts; but render not your joys too serious by dwelling for ever upon it. It is sufficient, once, to be acquainted with this philosophy, in order to give an unbounded loose to love and jollity, and remove all the scruples of a vain superstition: But while youth and passion, my fair one, prompt our eager desires, we must find gayer subjects of discourse to intermix with these amorous caresses.

ESSAY XVI.

The STOIC*.

THERE is this obvious and material difference in the conduct of nature, with regard to man and other animals, that, having endowed the former with a sublime celestial spirit, and having given him an affinity with superior beings, she allows not such noble faculties to lie lethargic or idle; but urges him, by necessity, to employ, on every emergence, his utmost *art* and *industry*. Brute-creatures have many of their necessities supplied by nature, being cloathed and armed by this beneficent parent of all things: And where their own *industry* is requisite on any occasion, nature, by implanting instincts, still supplies them with the *art*, and guides them to their good, by her unerring precepts. But man, exposed naked and indigent to the rude elements, rises slowly from that helpless state, by the care and vigilance of his parents; and having attained his utmost growth and perfection, reaches only a capacity of subsisting by his own care and vigilance. Every thing is sold to skill and labour; and where nature furnishes the materials, they are still rude and unfinished, till industry, ever active and intelligent, refines them from their brute state, and fits them for human use and convenience.

Acknowledge, therefore, O man! the beneficence of nature; for she has given thee that intelligence which supplies all thy necessities. But let not indolence, under the false appearance of gratitude, persuade thee to rest contented with her presents. Wouldest thou return to the raw herbage for thy food, to the open sky for thy covering, and to stones and clubs for thy defence against the ravenous animals of the desert? Then return also to thy

* Or the man of action and virtue.

thy ſavage manners, to thy timorous ſuperſtition, to thy brutal ignorance; and ſink thyſelf below thoſe animals, whoſe condition thou admireſt, and wouldeſt ſo fondly imitate.

Thy kind parent, nature, having given thee art and intelligence, has filled the whole globe with materials to employ theſe talents: Hearken to her voice, which ſo plainly tells thee, that thou thyſelf ſhouldeſt alſo be the object of thy induſtry, and that by art and attention alone thou canſt acquire that ability which will raiſe thee to thy proper ſtation in the univerſe. Behold this artizan, who converts a rude and ſhapeleſs ſtone into a noble metal; and moulding that metal by his cunning hands, creates, as it were by magic, every weapon for his defence, and every utenſil for his convenience. He has not this ſkill from nature: Uſe and practice have taught it him: And if thou wouldeſt emulate his ſucceſs, thou muſt follow his laborious foot-ſteps.

But while thou *ambitiouſly* aſpireſt to perfecting thy bodily powers and faculties, wouldeſt thou *meanly* neglect thy mind, and, from a prepoſterous ſloth, leave it ſtill rude and uncultivated, as it came from the hands of nature? Far be ſuch folly and negligence from every rational being. If nature has been frugal in her gifts and endowments, there is the more need of art to ſupply her defects. If ſhe has been generous and liberal, know that ſhe ſtill expects induſtry and application on our part, and revenges herſelf in proportion to our negligent ingratitude. The richeſt genius, like the moſt fertile ſoil, when uncultivated, ſhoots up into the rankeſt weeds; and inſtead of vines and olives for the pleaſure and uſe of man, produces, to its ſlothful owner, the moſt abundant crop of poiſons.

The great end of all human induſtry is the attainment of happineſs. For this were arts invented, ſciences cultivated, laws ordained, and ſocieties modelled, by the moſt profound wiſdom of patriots and legiſlators. Even the lonely ſavage, who lies expoſed to the inclemency of the elements, and the fury of wild beaſts, forgets not

for a moment this grand object of his being. Ignorant as he is of every art of life, he ſtill keeps in view the end of all thoſe arts, and eagerly ſeeks for felicity amidſt that darkneſs with which he is environed. But as much as the wildeſt ſavage is inferior to the poliſhed citizen, who, under the protection of laws, enjoys every convenience which induſtry has invented; ſo much is this citizen himſelf inferior to the man of virtue and the true philoſopher, who governs his appetites, ſubdues his paſſions, and has learned, from reaſon, to ſet a juſt value on every purſuit and enjoyment. For is there an art and apprenticeſhip neceſſary for every other attainment? And is there no art of life, no rule, no precepts to direct us in this principal concern? Can no particular preaſure be attained without ſkill; and can the whole be regulated, without reflection or intelligence, by the blind guidance of appetite and inſtinct? Surely then no miſtakes are ever committed in this affair? but every man, however diſſolute and negligent, proceeds in the purſuit of happineſs with as unerring a motion, as that which the celeſtial bodies obſerve, when, conducted by the hand of the Almighty, they roll along the ethereal plains. But if miſtakes be often, be inevitably committed, let us regiſter theſe miſtakes; let us conſider their cauſes; let us weigh their importance; let us enquire for their remedies. When from this we have fixed all the rules of conduct, we are *philoſophers*; when we have reduced theſe rules to practice, we are *ſages*.

Like many ſubordinate artiſts, employed to form the ſeveral wheels and ſprings of a machine; ſuch are thoſe who excel in all the particular arts of life. *He* is the maſter workman who puts thoſe ſeveral parts together; moves them according to juſt harmony and proportion; and produces true felicity as the reſult of their conſpiring order.

While thou haſt ſuch an alluring object in view, ſhall that labour and attention, requiſite to the attainment of thy end, ever ſeem burdenſome and intolerable? Know,

that

that this labour itself is the chief ingredient of the felicity to which thou aspirest, and that every enjoyment soon becomes insipid and distasteful, when not acquired by fatigue and industry. See the hardy hunters rise from their downy couches, shake off the slumbers which still weigh down their heavy eye-lids, and, ere *Aurora* has yet covered the heavens with her flaming mantle, hasten to the forest. They leave behind, in their own houses, and in the neighbouring plains, animals of every kind, whose flesh furnishes the most delicious fare, and which offer themselves to the fatal stroke. Laborious man disdains so easy a purchase. He seeks for a prey which hides itself from his search, or flies from his pursuit, or defends itself from his violence. Having exerted in the chase every passion of the mind, and every member of the body, he then finds the charms of repose, and with joy compares its pleasures to those of his engaging labours.

And can vigorous industry give pleasure to the pursuit even of the most worthless prey which frequently escapes our toils? And cannot the same industry render the cultivating of our mind, the moderating of our passions, the enlightening of our reason, an agreeable occupation; while we are every day sensible of our progress, and behold our inward features and countenance brightening incessantly with new charms? Begin by curing yourself of this lethargic indolence; the task is not difficult: You need but taste the sweets of honest labour. Proceed to learn the just value of every pursuit; long study is not requisite: Compare, though but for once, the mind to the body, virtue to fortune, and glory to pleasure. You will then perceive the advantages of industry: You will then be sensible what are the proper objects of your industry.

In vain do you seek repose from beds of roses: In vain do you hope for enjoyment from the most delicious wines and fruits. Your indolence itself becomes a fatigue: Your pleasure itself creates disgust. The mind, unexercised, finds every delight insipid and loathsome;

and ere yet the body, full of noxious humours, feels the torment of its multiplied diſeaſes, your nobler part is ſenſible of the invading poiſon, and ſeeks in vain to relieve its anxiety by new pleaſures, which ſtill augment the fatal malady.

I need not tell you, that, by this eager purſuit of pleaſure, you more and more expoſe yourſelf to fortune and accidents, and rivet your affections on external objects, which chance may, in a moment, raviſh from you. I ſhall ſuppoſe, that your indulgent ſtars favour you ſtill with the enjoyment of your riches and poſſeſſions. I prove to you, that even in the midſt of your luxurious pleaſures you are unhappy; and that by too much indulgence, you are incapable of enjoying what proſperous fortune ſtill allow you to poſſeſs.

But ſurely the inſtability of fortune is a conſideration not to be overlooked or neglected. Happineſs cannot poſſibly exiſt where there is no ſecurity; and ſecurity can have no place where fortune has any dominion. Though that unſtable deity ſhould not exert her rage againſt you, the dread of it would ſtill torment you; would diſturb your ſlumbers, haunt your dreams, and throw a damp on the jollity of your moſt delicious banquets.

The temple of wiſdom is ſeated on a rock, above the rage of the fighting elements, and inacceſſible to all the malice of man. The rolling thunder breaks below; and thoſe more terrible inſtruments of human fury reach not to ſo ſublime a height. The ſage, while he breathes that ſerene air, looks down with pleaſure, mixed with compaſſion, on the errors of miſtaken mortals, who blindly ſeek for the true path of life, and purſue riches, nobility, honour, or power, for genuine felicity. The greater part he beholds diſappointed of their fond wiſhes: Some lament, that having once poſſeſſed the object of their deſires, it is raviſhed from them by envious fortune: And all complain, that even their own views, though granted, cannot give them

them happineſs, or relieve the anxiety of their diſtracted minds.

But does the ſage always preſerve himſelf in this philoſophical indifference, and reſt contented with lamenting the miſeries of mankind, without ever employing himſelf for their relief? Does he conſtantly indulge this ſevere wiſdom, which, by pretending to elevate him above human accidents, does in reality harden his heart, and render him careleſs of the intereſts of mankind and of ſociety? No; he knows that in this ſullen *Apathy*, neither true wiſdom nor true happineſs can be found. He feels too ſtrongly the charm of the ſocial affections ever to counteract ſo ſweet, ſo natural, ſo virtuous a propenſity. Even when, bathed in tears, he laments the miſeries of human race, of his country, of his friends, and unable to give ſuccour, can only relieve them by compaſſion; he yet rejoices in the generous diſpoſition, and feels a ſatisfaction ſuperior to that of the moſt indulged ſenſe. So engaging are the ſentiments of humanity, that they brighten up the very face of ſorrow, and operate like the ſun, which, ſhining on a duſky cloud or falling rain, paints on them the moſt glorious colours which are to be found in the whole circle of nature.

But it is not here alone that the ſocial virtues diſplay their energy. With whatever ingredient you mix them they are ſtill predominant. As ſorrow cannot overcome them, ſo neither can ſenſual pleaſure obſcure them. The joys of love, however tumultuous, baniſh not the tender ſentiments of ſympathy and affection. They even derive their chief influence from that generous paſſion; and when preſented alone, afford nothing to the unhappy mind but laſſitude and diſguſt. Behold this ſprightly debauchee, who profeſſes a contempt of all other pleaſures but thoſe of wine and jollity. Separate him from his companions, like a ſpark from a fire, where before it contributed to the general blaze, his alacrity ſuddenly extinguiſhes; and, though ſurrounded with every other means of delight, he lothes the ſumptuous ban-

banquet, and prefers even the moſt abſtracted ſtudy and ſpeculation as more agreeable and entertaining.

But the ſocial paſſions never afford ſuch tranſporting pleaſures, or make ſo glorious an appearance in the eyes both of GOD and man, as when, ſhaking off every earthly mixture, they aſſociate themſelves with the ſentiments of virtue, and prompt us to laudable and worthy actions. As harmonious colours mutually give and receive a luſtre by their friendly union; ſo do theſe ennobling ſentiments of the human mind. See the triumph of nature in parental affection! What ſelfiſh paſſion; what ſenſual delight is a match for it! whether a man exults in the proſperity and virtue of his offſpring, or flies to their ſuccour, through the moſt threatening and tremendous dangers?

Proceed ſtill in purifying the generous paſſion, you will ſtill the more admire its ſhining glories. What charms are there in the harmony of minds, and in a friendſhip founded on mutual eſteem and gratitude! What ſatisfaction in relieving the diſtreſſed, in comforting the afflicted, in raiſing the fallen, and in ſtopping the career of cruel fortune, or of more cruel man, in their inſults over the good and virtuous! But what ſupreme joy in the victories over vice as well as miſery, when, by virtuous example or wiſe exhortation, our fellow-creatures are taught to govern their paſſions, reform their vices, and ſubdue their worſt enemies, which inhabit within their own boſoms?

But theſe objects are ſtill too limited for the human mind, which, being of celeſtial origin, ſwells with the divineſt and moſt enlarged affections, and, carrying its attention beyond kindred and acquaintance, extends its benevolent wiſhes to the moſt diſtant poſterity. It views liberty and laws as the ſource of human happineſs, and devotes itſelf, with the utmoſt alacrity, to their guardianſhip and protection. Toils, dangers, death itſelf, carry their charms, when we brave them for the public good, and ennoble that being which we generouſly ſacrifice for the intereſts of our country. Happy the

man whom indulgent fortune allows to pay to virtue what he owes to nature, and to make a generous gift of what muſt otherwiſe be raviſhed from him by cruel neceſſity!

In the true ſage and patriot are united whatever can diſtinguiſh human nature, or elevate mortal man to a reſemblance with the divinity. The ſofteſt benevolence, the moſt undaunted reſolution, the tendereſt ſentiments, the moſt ſublime love of virtue, all theſe animate ſucceſſively his tranſported boſom. What ſatisfaction, when he looks within, to find the moſt turbulent paſſions tuned to juſt harmony and concord, and every jarring ſound baniſhed from this enchanting muſic! If the contemplation, even of inanimate beauty, is ſo delightful; if it raviſhes the ſenſes, even when the fair form is foreign to us: what muſt be the effects of moral beauty? And what influence muſt it have when it embelliſhes our own mind, and is the reſult of our own reflection and induſtry?

But where is the reward of virtue? And what recompence has nature provided for ſuch important ſacrifices as thoſe of life and fortune, which we muſt often make to it? Oh, ſons of earth! are ye ignorant of the value of this celeſtial miſtreſs? And do ye meanly inquire for her portion, when ye obſerve her genuine charms? But know, that nature has been indulgent to human weakneſs, and has not left this favourite child naked and unendowed. She has provided virtue with the richeſt dowry; but being careful leſt the allurements of intereſt ſhould engage ſuch ſuitors as were inſenſible of the native worth of ſo divine a beauty, ſhe has wiſely provided, that this dowry can have no charms but in the eyes of thoſe who are already tranſported with the love of virtue. GLORY is the portion of virtue, the ſweet reward of honourable toils, the triumphant crown which covers the thoughtful head of the diſintereſted patriot, or the duſty brow of the victorious warrior. Elevated by ſo ſublime a prize, the man of virtue looks down with contempt on all the allurements of pleaſure, and all the menaces of danger.

Death

Death itſelf loſes its terrors, when he conſiders, that its dominion extends only over a part of him; and that, in ſpite of death and time, the rage of the elements, and the endleſs viciſſitude of human affairs, he is aſſured of an immortal fame among all the ſons of men.

There ſurely is a Being who preſides over the univerſe; and who, with infinite wiſdom and power, has reduced the jarring elements into juſt order and proportion. Let ſpeculative reaſoners diſpute how far this beneficent Being extends his care, and whether he prolongs our exiſtence beyond the grave, in order to beſtow on virtue its juſt reward, and render it fully triumphant. The man of morals, without deciding any thing on ſo dubious a ſubject, is ſatisfied with the portion marked out to him by the Supreme Diſpoſer of all things. Gratefully he accepts of that farther reward prepared for him; but if diſappointed, he thinks not virtue an empty name; but, juſtly eſteeming it its own reward, he gratefully acknowledges the bounty of his Creator, who, by calling him into exiſtence, has thereby afforded him an opportunity of once acquiring ſo invaluable a poſſeſſion.

ESSAY XVII.

The PLATONIST*.

TO ſome philoſophers it appears matter of ſurprize, that all mankind, poſſeſſing the ſame nature, and being endowed with the ſame faculties, ſhould yet differ ſo widely in their purſuits and inclinations, and that one ſhould utterly condemn what is fondly ſought after by another. To ſome it appears matter of ſtill more ſurpriſe, that a man ſhould differ ſo widely from himſelf, at dif-

* Or, the man of contemplation and *philoſophical* devotion.

different times; and, after poſſeſſion, reject with diſdain what before was the object of all his vows and wiſhes. To me, this feveriſh uncertainty and irreſolution in human conduct ſeems altogether unavoidable; nor can a rational ſoul, made for the contemplation of the Supreme Being, and of his works, ever enjoy tranquillity or ſatisfaction, while detained in the ignoble purſuits of ſenſual pleaſure or popular applauſe. The divinity is a boundleſs ocean of bliſs and glory: Human minds are ſmaller ſtreams, which, ariſing at firſt from this ocean, ſeek ſtill, amid all their wanderings, to return to it, and to loſe themſelves in that immenſity of perfection. When checked in this natural courſe by vice or folly, they become furious and enraged; and, ſwelling to a torrent, do then ſpread horror and devaſtation on the neighbouring plains.

In vain, by pompous phraſe and paſſionate expreſſion, each recommends his own purſuit, and invites the credulous hearers to an imitation of his life and manners. The heart belies the countenance, and ſenſibly feels, even amid the higheſt ſucceſs, the unſatisfactory nature of all thoſe pleaſures which detain it from its true object. I examine the voluptuous man before enjoyment; I meaſure the vehemence of his deſire and the importance of his object; I find that all his happineſs proceeds only from that hurry of thought which takes him from himſelf, and turns his view from his guilt and miſery. I conſider him a moment after; he has now enjoyed the pleaſure which he fondly ſought after. The ſenſe of his guilt and miſery returns upon him with double anguiſh: His mind tormented with fear and remorſe; his body depreſſed with diſguſt and ſatiety.

But a more auguſt, at leaſt a more haughty perſonage, preſents himſelf boldly to our cenſure; and, aſſuming the title of a philoſopher and man of morals, offers to ſubmit to the moſt rigid examination. He challenges with a viſible, though concealed impatience, our approbation and applauſe; and ſeems offended that we ſhould

hesitate a moment before we break out into admiration of his virtue. Seeing this impatience, I hesitate still more: I begin to examine the motives of his seeming virtue: But behold! ere I can enter upon this inquiry, he flings himself from me; and, addressing his discourse to that crowd of heedless auditors, fondly abuses them by his magnificent pretensions.

O philosopher! thy wisdom is vain, and thy virtue unprofitable. Thou seekest the ignorant applauses of men, not the solid reflections of thy own conscience, or the more solid approbation of that Being, who, with one regard of his all-seeing eye, penetrates the universe. Thou surely art conscious of the hollowness of thy pretended probity, whilst calling thyself a citizen, a son, a friend, thou forgettest thy higher sovereign, thy true father, thy greatest benefactor. Where is the adoration due to infinite perfection, whence every thing good and valuable is derived? Where is the gratitude owing to thy Creator, who called thee forth from nothing, who placed thee in all these relations to thy fellow-creatures, and requiring thee to fulfil the duty of each relation, forbids thee to neglect what thou owest to himself, the most perfect being, to whom thou art connected by the closest tye?

But thou art thyself thy own idol: Thou worshippest thy *imaginary* perfections: Or rather, sensible of thy *real* imperfections, thou seekest only to deceive the world, and to please thy fancy, by multiplying thy ignorant admirers. Thus, not content with neglecting what is most excellent in the universe, thou desirest to substitute in his place what is most vile and contemptible.

Consider all the works of mens hands; all the inventions of human wit, in which thou affectest so nice a discernment: Thou wilt find, that the most perfect production still proceeds from the most perfect thought, and that it is MIND alone which we admire, while we bestow our applause on the graces of a well-proportioned statue, or the symmetry of a noble pile. The statuary, the

the architect comes ſtill in view, and makes us reflect on the beauty of his art and contrivance, which, from a heap of unformed matter, could extract ſuch expreſſions and proportions. This ſuperior beauty of thought and intelligence thou thyſelf acknowledgeſt, while thou inviteſt us to contemplate, in thy conduct, the harmony of affections, the dignity of ſentiments, and all thoſe graces of a mind, which chiefly merit our attention. But why ſtoppeſt thou ſhort? Seeſt thou nothing farther that is valuable? Amid thy rapturous applauſes of beauty and order, art thou ſtill ignorant where is to be found the moſt conſummate beauty, the moſt perfect order? Compare the works of art with thoſe of nature. The one are but imitations of the other. The nearer art approaches to nature, the more perfect is it eſteemed. But ſtill, how wide are its neareſt approaches, and what an immenſe interval may be obſerved between them? Art copies only the outſide of nature, leaving the inward and more admirable ſprings and principles; as exceeding her imitation; as beyond her comprehenſion. Art copies only the minute productions of nature, deſpairing to reach that grandeur and magnificence, which are ſo aſtoniſhing in the maſterly works of her original. Can we then be ſo blind as not to diſcover an intelligence and a deſign in the exquiſite and moſt ſtupendous contrivance of the univerſe? Can we be ſo ſtupid as not to feel the warmeſt raptures of worſhip and adoration, upon the contemplation of that intelligent being, ſo infinitely good and wiſe?

The moſt perfect happineſs, ſurely, muſt ariſe from the contemplation of the moſt perfect object. But what more perfect than beauty and virtue? And where is beauty to be found equal to that of the univerſe? Or virtue, which can be compared to the benevolence and juſtice of the Deity? If aught can diminiſh the pleaſure of this contemplation, it muſt be either the narrowneſs of our faculties, which conceals from us the greateſt part of theſe beauties and perfections; or the ſhortneſs of our lives, which allows not time ſufficient to inſtruct us

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in them. But it is our comfort, that, if we employ worthily the faculties here assigned us, they will be enlarged in another state of existence, so as to render us more suitable worshippers of our Maker: And that the task, which can never be finished in time, will be the business of an eternity.

ESSAY XVIII.

The SCEPTIC.

I HAVE long entertained a suspicion with regard to the decisions of philosophers upon all subjects, and found in myself a greater inclination to dispute, than assent to their conclusions. There is one mistake to which they seem liable, almost without exception; they confine too much their principles, and make no account of that vast variety which nature has so much affected in all her operations. When a philosopher has once laid hold of a favourite principle, which perhaps accounts for many natural effects, he extends the same principle over the whole creation, and reduces to it every phenomenon, though by the most violent and absurd reasoning. Our own mind being narrow and contracted, we cannot extend our conception to the variety and extent of nature; but imagine, that she is as much bounded in her operations as we are in our speculation.

But if ever this infirmity of philosophers is to be suspected on any occasion, it is in their reasonings concerning human life, and the methods of attaining happiness. In that case they are led astray, not only by the narrowness of their understandings, but by that also of their passions. Almost every one has a predominant inclination, to which his other desires and affections submit, and

and which governs him, though perhaps with some intervals, through the whole course of his life. It is difficult for him to apprehend, that any thing which appears totally indifferent to him, can ever give enjoyment to any person, or can possess charms which altogether escape his observation. His own pursuits are always, in his account, the most engaging; the objects of his passion, the most valuable; and the road which he pursues, the only one that leads to happiness.

But would these prejudiced reasoners reflect a moment, there are many obvious instances and arguments sufficient to undeceive them, and make them enlarge their maxims and principles. Do they not see the vast variety of inclinations and pursuits among our species; where each man seems fully satisfied with his own course of life, and would esteem it the greatest unhappiness to be confined to that of his neighbour? Do they not feel in themselves, that what pleases at one time displeases at another, by the change of inclination; and that it is not in their power, by their utmost efforts, to recal that taste or appetite which formerly bestowed charms on what now appears indifferent or disagreeable? What is the meaning therefore of those general preferences of the town or country life, of a life of action or one of pleasure, of retirement or society; when, besides the different inclinations of different men, every one's experience may convince him, that each of these kinds of life is agreeable in its turn, and that their variety or their judicious mixture chiefly contributes to the rendering all of them agreeable?

But shall this business be allowed to go altogether at adventures? And must a man consult only his humour and inclination, in order to determine his course of life, without employing his reason to inform him what road is preferable, and leads most surely to happiness? Is there no difference then between one man's conduct and another?

I answer, there is a great difference. One man, following his inclination, in choosing his course of life,

may employ much surer means for succeeding than another, who is led by his inclination into the same course of life, and pursues the same object. *Are riches the chief object of your desires?* Acquire skill in your profession; be diligent in the exercise of it; enlarge the circle of your friends and acquaintance; avoid pleasure and expence; and never be generous but with a view of gaining more than you could save by frugality. *Would you acquire the public esteem?* Guard equally against the extremes of arrogance and fawning. Let it appear that you set a value upon yourself, but without despising others. If you fall into either of the extremes, you either provoke mens pride by your insolence, or teach them to despise you by your timorous submission, and by the mean opinion which you seem to entertain of yourself.

These, you say, are the maxims of common prudence and discretion; what every parent inculcates on his child, and what every man of sense pursues in the course of life which he has chosen.—What is it then you desire more? Do you come to a philosopher as to a *cunning man*, to learn something by magic or witchcraft, beyond what can be known by common prudence and discretion?——Yes; we come to a philosopher to be instructed, how we shall choose our ends, more than the means for attaining these ends: We want to know what desire we shall gratify, what passion we shall comply with, what appetite we shall indulge. As to the rest, we trust to common sense, and the general maxims of the world for our instruction.

I am sorry then I have pretended to be a philosopher: For I find your questions very perplexing; and am in danger, if my answer be too rigid and severe, of passing for a pedant and scholastic; if it be too easy and free, of being taken for a preacher of vice and immorality. However, to satisfy you, I shall deliver my opinion upon the matter, and shall only desire you to esteem it of as little consequence as I do myself. By that means you will

will neither think it worthy of your ridicule nor your anger.

If we can depend upon any principle which we learn from philoſophy, this, I think, may be conſidered as certain and undoubted, that there is nothing in itſelf valuable or deſpicable, deſirable or hateful, beautiful or deformed; but that theſe attributes ariſe from the particular conſtitution and fabric of human ſentiment and affection. What ſeems the moſt delicious food to one animal, appears loathſome to another: What affects the feeling of one with delight, produces uneaſineſs in another. This is confeſſedly the caſe with regard to all the bodily ſenſes: But if we examine the matter more accurately, we ſhall find, that the ſame obſervation holds even where the mind concurs with the body, and mingles its ſentiment with the exterior appetite.

Deſire this paſſionate lover to give you a character of his miſtreſs: He will tell you, that he is at a loſs for words to deſcribe her charms, and will aſk you very ſeriouſly, if ever you were acquainted with a goddeſs or an angel? If you anwer that you never were: He will then ſay, that it is impoſſible for you to form a conception of ſuch divine beauties as thoſe which his charmer poſſeſſes; ſo complete a ſhape; ſuch well-proportioned features; ſo engaging an air; ſuch ſweetneſs of diſpoſition; ſuch gaiety of humour. You can infer nothing, however, from all this diſcourſe, but that the poor man is in love; and that the general appetite between the ſexes, which nature has infuſed into all animals, is in him determined to a particular object by ſome qualities, which give him pleaſure. The ſame divine creature, not only to a different animal, but alſo to a different man, appears a mere mortal being, and is beheld with the utmoſt indifference.

Nature has given all animals a like prejudice in favour of their offſpring. As ſoon as the helpleſs infant ſees the light, though in every other eye it appears a deſpicable and a miſerable creature, it is regarded by its fond parent with the utmoſt affection, and is preferred to

every other object, however perfect and accomplished. The passion alone, arising from the original structure and formation of human nature, bestows a value on the most insignificant object.

We may push the same observation further, and may conclude, that even when the mind operates alone, and feeling the sentiment of blame or approbation, pronounces one object deformed and odious, another beautiful and amiable: I say, that even in this case, those qualities are not really in the objects, but belong entirely to the sentiment of that mind which blames or praises. I grant, that it will be more difficult to make this proposition evident, and, as it were, palpable to negligent thinkers; because nature is more uniform in the sentiments of the mind than in most feelings of the body, and produces a nearer resemblance in the inward than in the outward part of human kind. There is something approaching to principles in mental taste; and critics can reason and dispute more plausibly than cooks or perfumers. We may observe, however, that this uniformity among human kind hinders not, but that there is a considerable diversity in the sentiments of beauty and worth; and that education, custom, prejudice, caprice, and humour, frequently vary our taste of this kind. You will never convince a man who is not accustomed to ITALIAN music, and has not an ear to follow its intricacies, that a SCOTCH tune is not preferable. You have not even any single argument, beyond your own taste, which you can employ in your behalf: And to your antagonist, his particular taste will always appear a more convincing argument to the contrary. If you be wise, each of you will allow that the other may be in the right; and having many other instances of this diversity of taste, you will both confess, that beauty and worth are merely of a relative nature, and consist in an agreeable sentiment, produced by an object in a particular mind, according to the peculiar structure and constitution of that mind.

By this diversity of sentiment, observable in human kind,

kind, nature has perhaps intended to make us ſenſible of her authority, and let us ſee what ſurpriſing changes ſhe could produce on the paſſions and deſires of mankind, merely by the change of their inward fabric, without any alteration on the objects. The vulgar may even be convinced by this argument: But men, accuſtomed to thinking, may draw a more convincing, at leaſt a more general argument, from the very nature of the ſubject.

In the operation of reaſoning, the mind does nothing but run over its objects, as they are ſuppoſed to ſtand in reality, without adding any thing to them, or diminiſhing any thing from them. If I examine the PTOLOMAIC and COPERNICAN ſyſtems, I endeavour only, by my inquiries, to know the real ſituation of the planets; that is, in other words, I endeavour to give them, in my conception, the ſame relations that they bear towards each other in the heavens. To this operation of the mind, therefore, there ſeems to be always a real, though often an unknown ſtandard, in the nature of things; nor is truth or falſehood variable by the various apprehenſions of mankind. Though all human race ſhould for ever conclude, that the ſun moves, and the earth remains at reſt, the ſun ſtirs not an inch from his place for all theſe reaſonings; and ſuch concluſions are eternally falſe and erroneous.

But the caſe is not the ſame with the qualities of *beautiful and deformed, deſirable and odious*, as with truth and falſehood. In the former caſe, the mind is not content with merely ſurveying its objects as they ſtand in themſelves; it alſo feels a ſentiment of delight or uneaſineſs, approbation or blame, conſequent to that ſurvey; and this ſentiment determines it to affix the epithet *beautiful or deformed, deſirable or odious*. Now, it is evident, that this ſentiment muſt depend upon the particular fabric or ſtructure of the mind, which enables ſuch particular forms to operate in ſuch a particular manner, and produces a ſympathy or conformity between the mind and its objects. Vary the ſtructure of the mind or inward

organs, the sentiment no longer follows, though the form remains the same. The sentiment being different from the object, and arising from its operation upon the organs of the mind, an alteration upon the latter must vary the effect, nor can the same object, presented to a mind totally different, produce the same sentiment.

This conclusion every one is apt to draw of himself without much philosophy, where the sentiment is evidently distinguishable from the object. Who is not sensible, that power, and glory, and vengeance, are not desirable of themselves, but derive all their value from the structure of human passions, which begets a desire towards such particular pursuits? But with regard to beauty, either natural or moral, the case is commonly supposed to be different. The agreeable quality is thought to lie in the object, not in the sentiment; and that merely because the sentiment is not so turbulent and violent as to distinguish itself, in an evident manner, from the perception of the object.

But a little reflection suffices to distinguish them. A man may know exactly all the circles and ellipses of the COPERNICAN system, and all the irregular spirals of the PTOLOMAIC, without perceiving that the former is more beautiful than the latter. EUCLID has fully explained every quality of the circle, but has not, in any proposition, said a word of its beauty. The reason is evident. Beauty is not a quality of the circle. It lies not in any part of the line, *whose* parts are all equally distant from a common centre. It is only the effect which that figure produces upon a mind, whose particular fabric or structure renders it susceptible of such sentiments. In vain would you look for it in the circle, or seek it, either by your senses or by mathematical reasonings, in all the properties of that figure.

The mathematician, who took no other pleasure in reading VIRGIL, but that of examining ENEAS's voyage by the map, might perfectly understand the meaning of every Latin word employed by that divine author; and consequently, might have a distinct idea of the whole narration.

ration. He would even have a more distinct idea of it, than they could attain who had not studied so exactly the geography of the poem. He knew, therefore, every thing in the poem: But he was ignorant of its beauty; because the beauty, properly speaking, lies not in the poem, but in the sentiment or taste of the reader. And where a man has no such delicacy of temper, as to make him feel this sentiment, he must be ignorant of the beauty, though possessed of the science and understanding of an angel *.

The inference upon the whole is, that it is not from the value or worth of the object, which any person pursues, that we can determine his enjoyment, but merely from the passion with which he pursues it, and the success which he meets with in his pursuit. Objects have absolutely no worth or value in themselves. They derive their worth merely from the passion. If that be strong, and steady, and successful, the person is happy. It cannot reasonably be doubted, but a little miss, dressed in a new gown for a dancing-school ball, receives as complete enjoyment as the greatest orator, who triumphs in the splendor of his eloquence, while he governs the passions and resolutions of a numerous assembly.

All the difference, therefore, betwen one man and another with regard to life, consists either in the *passion* or in the *enjoyment:* And these differences are sufficient to produce the wide extremes of happiness and misery.

To be happy, the *passion* must neither be too violent nor too remiss. In the first case, the mind is in a perpetual hurry and tumult; in the second, it sinks into a disagreeable indolence and lethargy.

To be happy, the passion must be benign and social; not rough or fierce. The affections of the latter kind are not near so agreeable to the feeling as those of the former. Who will compare rancour and animosity, envy and revenge, to friendship, benignity, clemency, and gratitude?

To be happy, the passion must be cheerful and gay,

* See NOTE [F].

not gloomy and melancholy. A propenſity to hope and joy is real riches; one to fear and ſorrow, real poverty.

Some paſſions or inclinations, in the *enjoyment* of their object, are not ſo ſteady or conſtant as others, nor convey ſuch durable pleaſure and ſatisfaction. *Philoſophical devotion*, for inſtance, like the enthuſiaſm of a poet, is the tranſitory effect of high ſpirits, great leiſure, a fine genius, and a habit of ſtudy and contemplation: But notwithſtanding all theſe circumſtances, an abſtract, inviſible object, like that which *natural* religion alone preſents to us, cannot long actuate the mind, or be of any moment in life. To render the paſſion of countenance, we muſt find ſome method of affecting the ſenſes and imagination, and muſt embrace ſome *hiſtorical* as well as *philoſophical* account of the divinity. Popular ſuperſtitions and obſervances are even found to be of uſe in this particular.

Though the tempers of men be very different, yet we may ſafely pronounce in general, that a life of pleaſure cannot ſupport itſelf ſo long as one of buſineſs, but is much more ſubject to ſatiety and diſguſt. The amuſements which are the moſt durable, have all a mixture of application and attention in them; ſuch as gaming and hunting. And in general, buſineſs and action fill up all the great vacancies in human life.

But where the temper is the beſt diſpoſed for any *enjoyment*, the object is often wanting: And in this reſpect, the paſſions which purſue external objects contribute not ſo much to happineſs, as thoſe which reſt in ourſelves; ſince we are neither ſo certain of attaining ſuch objects, nor ſo ſecure in poſſeſſing them. A paſſion for learning is preferable, with regard to happineſs, to one for riches.

Some men are poſſeſſed of great ſtrength of mind; and even when they purſue *external* objects, are not much affected by a diſappointment, but renew their application and induſtry with the greateſt cheerfulneſs. Nothing contributes more to happineſs than ſuch a turn of mind.

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According to this short and imperfect sketch of human life, the happiest disposition of mind is the *virtuous;* or, in other words, that which leads to action and employment, renders us sensible to the social passions, steels the heart against the assaults of fortune, reduces the affections to a just moderation, makes our own thoughts an entertainment to us, and inclines us rather to the pleasures of society and conversation, than to those of the senses. This, in the mean time, must be obvious to the most careless reasoner, that all dispositions of mind are not alike favourable to happiness, and that one passion or humour may be extremely desirable, while another is equally disagreeable. And indeed, all the difference between the conditions of life depends upon the mind; nor is there any one situation of affairs, in itself, preferable to another. Good and ill, both natural and moral, are entirely relative to human sentiment and affection. No man would ever be unhappy, could he alter his feelings. PROTEUS-like, he would elude all attacks, by the continual alterations of his shape and form.

But of this resource nature has, in a great measure, deprived us. The fabric and constitution of our mind no more depends on our choice than that of our body. The generality of men have not even the smallest notion, that any alteration in this respect can ever be desirable. As a stream necessarily follows the several inclinations of the ground on which it runs; so are the ignorant and thoughtless part of mankind actuated by their natural propensities. Such are effectually excluded from all pretensions to philosophy, and the *medicine of the mind*, so much boasted. But even upon the wise and thoughtful, nature has a prodigious influence; nor is it always in a man's power, by the utmost art and industry, to correct his temper, and attain that virtuous character to which he aspires. The empire of philosophy extends over a few; and with regard to these too, her authority is very weak and limited. Men may well be sensible of the value of virtue, and may desire to attain it; but it is not always

always certain that they will be ſucceſsful in their wiſhes.

Whoever conſiders, without prejudice, the courſe of human actions, will find, that mankind are almoſt entirely guided by conſtitution and temper, and that general maxims have little influence, but ſo far as they affect our taſte or ſentiment. If a man have a lively ſenſe of honour and virtue, with moderate paſſions, his conduct will always be conformable to the rules of morality; or if he depart from them, his return will be eaſy and expeditious. On the other hand, where one is born of ſo perverſe a frame of mind, of ſo callous and inſenſible a diſpoſition, as to have no reliſh for virtue or humanity, no ſympathy with his fellow-creatures, no deſire of eſteem and applauſe; ſuch a one muſt be allowed entirely incurable, nor is there any remedy in philoſophy. He reaps no ſatisfaction but from low and ſenſual objects, or from the indulgence of malignant paſſions: He feels no remorſe to control his vicious inclinations: He has not even that ſenſe or taſte which is requiſite to make him deſire a better character. For my part, I know not how I ſhould addreſs myſelf to ſuch a one, or by what arguments I ſhould endeavour to reform him. Should I tell him of the inward ſatisfaction which reſults from laudable and humane actions, the delicate pleaſure of diſintereſted love and friendſhip, the laſting enjoyments of a good name and an eſtabliſhed character, he might ſtill reply, that theſe were perhaps pleaſures to ſuch as were ſuſceptible of them; but that, for his part, he finds himſelf of a quite different turn and diſpoſition. I muſt repeat it; my philoſophy affords no remedy in ſuch a caſe, nor could I do any thing but lament this perſon's unhappy condition. But then I aſk, If any other philoſophy can afford a remedy; or if it be poſſible, by any ſyſtem, to render all mankind virtuous, however perverſe may be their natural frame of mind? Experience will ſoon convince us of the contrary; and I will venture to affirm, that perhaps the chief benefit which reſults from philoſophy, ariſes in an indirect manner, and proceeds

more from its ſecret, inſenſible influence, than from its immediate application.

It is certain, that a ſerious attention to the ſciences and liberal arts ſoftens and humanizes the temper, and cheriſhes thoſe fine emotions, in which true virtue and honour conſiſt. It rarely, very rarely happens, that a man of taſte and learning is not, at leaſt, an honeſt man, whatever frailties may attend him. The bent of his mind to ſpeculative ſtudies muſt mortify in him the paſſions of intereſt and ambition, and muſt at the ſame time give him a greater ſenſibility of all the decencies and duties of life. He feels more fully a moral diſtinction in characters and manners; nor is his ſenſe of this kind diminiſhed, but, on the contrary, it is much increaſed by ſpeculation.

Beſides ſuch inſenſible changes upon the temper and diſpoſition, it is highly probable that others may be produced by ſtudy and application. The prodigious effects of education may convince us, that the mind is not altogether ſtubborn and inflexible, but will admit of many alterations from its original make and ſtructure. Let a man propoſe to himſelf the model of a character which he approves; let him be well acquainted with thoſe particulars in which his own character deviates from this model; let him keep a conſtant watch over himſelf, and bend his mind, by a continual effort, from the vices towards the virtues; and I doubt not but, in time, he will find in his temper an alteration for the better.

Habit is another powerful means of reforming the mind, and implanting in it good diſpoſitions and inclinations. A man who continues in a courſe of ſobriety and temperance, will hate riot and diſorder: If he engage in buſineſs or ſtudy, indolence will ſeem a puniſhment to him: If he conſtrain himſelf to practiſe beneficence and affability, he will ſoon abhor all inſtances of pride and violence. Where one is thoroughly convinced that the virtuous courſe of life is preferable; if he have but reſolution enough, for ſome time, to impoſe a violence on himſelf; his reformation needs not be deſpaired of. The

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misfortune is, that this conviction and this resolution never can have place, unless a man be before-hand tolerably virtuous.

Here then is the chief triumph of art and philosophy: It insensibly refines the temper, and it points out to us those dispositions which we should endeavour to attain, by a constant *bent* of mind and by repeated *habit*. Beyond this I cannot acknowledge it to have great influence; and I must entertain doubts concerning all those exhortations and consolations, which are in such vogue among speculative reasoners.

We have already observed, that no objects are in themselves desirable or odious, valuable or despicable; but that objects acquire these qualities from the particular character and constitution of the mind which surveys them. To diminish, therefore, or augment any person's value for an object, to excite or moderate his passions, there are no direct arguments or reasons which can be employed with any force or influence. The catching of flies, like DOMITIAN, if it give more pleasure, is preferable to the hunting of wild beasts, like WILLIAM RUFUS, or conquering of kingdoms like ALEXANDER.

But though the value of every object can be determined only by the sentiment or passion of every individual, we may observe, that the passion, in pronouncing its verdict, considers not the object simply as it is in itself, but surveys it with all the circumstances which attend it. A man transported with joy on account of possessing a diamond, confines not his view to the glistering stone before him: he also considers its rarity; and thence chiefly arises his pleasure and exultation. Here therefore a philosopher may step in, and suggest particular views and considerations and circumstances, which otherwise would have escaped us; and, by that means, he may either moderate or excite any particular passion.

It may seem unreasonable absolutely to deny the authority of philosophy in this respect: But it must be confessed, that there lies this strong presumption against it, that, if these views be natural and obvious, they would have

have occurred of themſelves, without the aſſiſtance of philoſophy; if they be not natural, they never can have any influence on the affections. *Theſe* are of a very delicate nature, and cannot be forced or conſtrained by the utmoſt art or induſtry. A conſideration which we ſeek for on purpoſe, which we enter into with difficulty, which we cannot retain without care and attention, will never produce thoſe genuine and durable movements of paſſion, which are the reſult of nature, and the conſtitution of the mind. A man may as well pretend to cure himſelf of love, by viewing his miſtreſs through the *artificial* medium of a microſcope or proſpect, and beholding there the coarſeneſs of her ſkin, and monſtrous diſproportion of her features, as hope to excite or moderate any paſſion by the *artificial* arguments of a SENECA or an EPICTETUS. The remembrance of the natural aſpect and ſituation of the object, will in both caſes ſtill recur upon him. The reflections of philoſophy are too ſubtile and diſtant to take place in common life, or eradicate any affection. The air is too fine to breathe in, where it is above the winds and clouds of the atmoſphere.

Another defect of thoſe refined reflections which philoſophy ſuggeſts to us, is, that commonly they cannot diminiſh or extinguiſh our vicious paſſions, without diminiſhing or extinguiſhing ſuch as are virtuous, and rendering the mind totally indifferent and unactive. They are, for the moſt part, general, and are applicable to all our affections. In vain do we hope to direct their influence only to one ſide. If by inceſſant ſtudy and meditation we have rendered them intimate and preſent to us, they will operate throughout, and ſpread an univerſal inſenſibility over the mind. When we deſtroy the nerves, we extinguiſh the ſenſe of pleaſure, together with that of pain, in the human body.

It will be eaſy, by one glance of the eye, to find one or other of theſe defects in moſt of thoſe philoſophical reflections, ſo much celebrated both in ancient and modern times. *Let not the injuries or violence of men*, ſay the phi-

philosophers *, *ever discompose you by anger or hatred. Would you be angry at the ape for its malice, or the tyger for its ferocity?* This reflection leads us into a bad opinion of human nature, and must extinguish the social affections. It tends also to prevent all remorse for a man's own crimes; when he considers, that vice is as natural to mankind as the particular instincts to brute-creatures.

All ills arise from the order of the universe, which is absolutely perfect. Would you wish to disturb so divine an order for the sake of your own particular interest? What if the ills I suffer arise from malice or oppression? *But the vices and imperfections of men are also comprehended in the order of the universe:*

If plagues and earthquakes break not heav'n's design,
Why then a BORGIA *or a* CATILINE?

Let this be allowed; and my own vices will also be a part of the same order.

To one who said, that none were happy who were not above opinion, a SPARTAN replied, *Then none are happy but knaves and robbers* †.

Man is born to be miserable; and is he surprised at any particular misfortune? And can he give way to sorrow and lamentation upon account of any disaster? Yes: He very reasonably laments that he should be born to be miserable. Your consolation presents a hundred ills for one, of which you pretend to ease him.

You should always have before your eyes death, disease, poverty, blindness, exile, calumny, and infamy, as ills which are incident to human nature. If any one of these ills fall to your lot, you will bear it the better when you have reckoned upon it. I answer, if we confine ourselves to a general and distant reflection on the ills of human life, *that* can have no effect to prepare us for them. If by close and intense meditation we render them present and intimate to us, *that* is the true secret for poisoning all our pleasures, and rendering us perpetually miserable.

Your sorrow is fruitless, and will not change the course of

* PLUT. *De ira cohibenda.* † PLUT. *Lacon Apophthegm.*

of deſtiny. Very true: And for that very reaſon I am ſorry.

Cicero's conſolation for deafneſs is ſomewhat curious. *How many languages are there,* ſays he, *which you do not underſtand? The* PUNIC, SPANISH, GALLIC, ÆGYPTIAN, &c. *With regard to all theſe, you are as if you were deaf, yet you are indifferent about the matter. Is it then ſo great a misfortune to be deaf to one language more *?*

I like better the repartee of ANTIPATER the CYRENIAC, when ſome women were condoling with him for his blindneſs: *What!* ſays he, *Do you think there are no pleaſures in the dark?*

Nothing can be more deſtructive, ſays FONTENELLE, *to ambition, and the paſſion for conqueſt, than the true ſyſtem of aſtronomy. What a poor thing is even the whole globe in compariſon of the infinite extent of nature?* This conſideration is evidently too diſtant ever to have any effect. Or, if it had any, would it not deſtroy patriotiſm as well as ambition? The ſame gallant author adds with ſome reaſon, that the bright eyes of the ladies are the only objects which loſe nothing of their luſtre or value from the moſt extenſive views of aſtronomy, but ſtand proof againſt every ſyſtem. Would philoſophers adviſe us to limit our affection to them?

Exile, ſays PLUTARCH to a friend in baniſhment, *is no evil: Mathematicians tell us, that the whole earth is but a point, compared to the heavens. To change one's country then is little more than to remove from one ſtreet to another. Man is not a plant, rooted to a certain ſpot of earth: All ſoils and all climates are alike ſuited to him* †. Theſe topics are admirable, could they fall only into the hands of baniſhed perſons. But what if they come alſo to the knowledge of thoſe who are employed in public affairs, and deſtroy all their attachment to their native country? Or will they operate like the quack's medicine, which is equally good for a diabetes and a dropſy?

It is certain, were a ſuperior being thruſt into a human body, that the whole of life would to him appear ſo mean,

* Tusc. *Queſt.* lib. v. † *De exilio.*

mean, contemptible, and puerile, that he never could be induced to take part in any thing, and would scarcely give attention to what passes around him. To engage him to such a condescension as to play even the part of a PHILIP with zeal and alacrity, would be much more difficult than to constrain the same PHILIP, after having been a king and a conqueror during fifty years, to mend old shoes with proper care and attention; the occupation which LUCIAN assigns him in the infernal regions. Now all the same topics of disdain towards human affairs, which could operate on this supposed being, occur also to the philosopher; but being in some measure disproportioned to human capacity, and not being fortified by the experience of any thing better, they make not a full impression on him. He sees, but he feels not sufficiently their truth; and is always a sublime philosopher when he needs not; that is, as long as nothing disturbs him or rouzes his affections. While others play, he wonders at their keenness and ardour; but he no sooner puts in his own stake, than he is commonly transported with the same passions that he had so much condemned while he remained a simple spectator.

There are two considerations chiefly to be met with in books of philosophy, from which any important effect is to be expected, and that because these considerations are drawn from common life, and occur upon the most superficial view of human affairs. When we reflect on the shortness and uncertainty of life, how despicable seem all our pursuits of happiness? And even if we would extend our concern beyond our own life, how frivolous appear our most enlarged and most generous projects; when we consider the incessant changes and revolutions of human affairs, by which laws and learning, books and governments, are hurried away by time, as by a rapid stream, and are lost in the immense ocean of matter? Such a reflection certainly tends to mortify all our passions: But does it not thereby counterwork the artifice of nature, who has happily deceived us into an opinion, that human life is of some importance? And may not

such a reflection be employed with success by voluptuous reasoners, in order to lead us from the paths of action and virtue into the flowery fields of indolence and pleasure?

We are informed by THUCIDYDES, that, during the famous plague of ATHENS, when death seemed present to every one, a dissolute mirth and gaiety prevailed among the people, who exhorted one another to make the most of life as long as it endured. The same observation is made by BOCCACE with regard to the plague of FLORENCE. A like principle makes soldiers, during war, be more addicted to riot and expence than any other race of men. Present pleasure is always of importance; and whatever diminishes the importance of all other objects, must bestow on it an additional influence and value.

The *second* philosophical consideration, which may often have an influence on the affections, is derived from a comparison of our own condition with the condition of others. This comparison we are continually making, even in common life; but the misfortune is, that we are rather apt to compare our situation with that of our superiors than with that of our inferiors. A philosopher corrects this natural infirmity, by turning his view to the other side, in order to render himself easy in the situation to which fortune has confined him. There are few people who are not susceptible of some consolation from this reflection; though, to a very good-natured man, the view of human miseries should rather produce sorrow than comfort, and add, to his lamentations for his own misfortunes, a deep compassion for those of others. Such is the imperfection, even of the best of these philosophical topics of consolation *.

I shall conclude this subject with observing, that though virtue be undoubtedly the best choice, when it is attainable; yet such is the disorder, and confusion of human affairs, that no perfect or regular distribution of happiness and misery is ever in this life to be expected.

* See NOTE [G].

Not only the goods of fortune and the endowments of the body (both of which are important), not only these advantages, I say, are unequally divided between the virtuous and vicious, but even the mind itself partakes, in some degree, of this disorder; and the most worthy character, by the very constitution of the passions, enjoys not always the highest felicity.

It is observable, that though every bodily pain proceeds from some disorder in the part or organ, yet the pain is not always proportioned to the disorder; but is greater or less, according to the greater or less sensibility of the part upon which the noxious humours exert their influence. A *toothach* produces more violent convulsions of pain than a *phthisis* or a *dropsy*. In like manner, with regard to the œconomy of the mind, we may observe, that all vice is indeed pernicious; yet the disturbance or pain is not measured out by nature with exact proportion to the degree of vice, nor is the man of highest virtue, even abstracting from external accidents, always the most happy. A gloomy and melancholy disposition is certainly, *to our sentiments*, a vice or imperfection; but as it may be accompanied with great sense of honour and great integrity, it may be found in very worthy characters; though it is sufficient alone to imbitter life, and render the person affected with it completely miserable. On the other hand, a selfish villain may possess a spring and alacrity of temper, a certain *gaiety of heart*, which is indeed a good quality, but which is rewarded much beyond its merit; and when attended with good fortune, will compensate for the uneasiness and remorse arising from all the other vices.

I shall add, as an observation to the same purpose, that if a man be liable to a vice or imperfection, it may often happen, that a good quality which he possesses along with it, will render him more miserable than if he were completely vicious. A person of such imbecility of temper as to be easily broken by affliction, is more unhappy for being endowed with a generous and friendly disposition, which gives him a lively concern for others,

and

and expoſes him the more to fortune and accidents. A ſenſe of ſhame, in an imperfect character, is certainly a virtue; but produces great uneaſineſs and remorſe, from which the abandoned villain is entirely free. A very amorous complexion, with a heart incapable of friendſhip, is happier than the ſame exceſs in love with a generoſity of temper, which tranſports a man beyond himſelf, and renders him a total ſlave to the object of his paſſion.

In a word, human life is more governed by fortune than by reaſon; is to be regarded more as a dull paſtime than as a ſerious occupation; and is more influenced by particular humour than by general principles. Shall we engage ourſelves in it with paſſion and anxiety? It is not worthy of ſo much concern. Shall we be indifferent about what happens? We loſe all the pleaſure of the game by our phlegm and careleſſneſs. While we are reaſoning concerning life, life is gone; and death, tho' *perhaps* they receive him differently, yet treats alike the fool and the philoſopher. To reduce life to exact rule and method, is commonly a painful, oft a fruitleſs occupation: And is it not alſo a proof, that we overvalue the prize for which we contend? Even to reaſon ſo carefully concerning it, and to fix with accuracy its juſt idea, would be overvaluing it, were it not that to ſome tempers this occupation is one of the moſt amuſing in which life could poſſibly be employed.

ESSAY XIX.

Of Polygamy and Divorces.

AS marriage is an engagement entered into by mutual conſent, and has for its end the propagation of the ſpecies, it is evident that it muſt be ſuſceptible of all the variety of conditions which conſent eſtabliſhes, provided they be not contrary to this end.

A man, in conjoining himſelf to a woman, is bound to her according to the terms of his engagement: In begetting children, he is bound, by all the ties of nature and humanity, to provide for their ſubſiſtence and education. When he has performed theſe two parts of duty, no one can reproach him with injuſtice or injury. And as the terms of his engagement, as well as the methods of ſubſiſting his offspring, may be various, it is mere ſuperſtition to imagine, that marriage can be entirely uniform, and will admit only of one mode or form. Did not human laws reſtrain the natural liberty of men, every particular marriage would be as different as contracts or bargains of any other kind or ſpecies.

As circumſtances vary, and the laws propoſe different advantages, we find, that in different times and places they impoſe different conditions on this important contract. In Tonquin, it is uſual for the ſailors, when the ſhips come into harbour, to marry for the ſeaſon; and notwithſtanding this precarious engagement, they are aſſured, it is ſaid, of the ſtricteſt fidelity to their bed, as well as in the whole management of their affairs, from thoſe temporary ſpouſes.

I cannot at preſent recollect my authorities; but I have ſomewhere read, that the republic of Athens, having loſt many of its citizens by war and peſtilence, allowed every man to marry two wives, in order the ſooner to repair the waſte which had been made by theſe cala-

calamities. The poet EURIPIDES happened to be coupled to two noisy Vixens, who so plagued him with their jealousies and quarrels, that he became ever after a professed *woman-hater;* and is the only theatrical writer, perhaps the only poet, that ever entertained an aversion to the sex.

In that agreeable romance, called *the History of the* SEVARAMBIANS, where a great many men and a few women are supposed to be shipwrecked on a desert coast; the captain of the troop, in order to obviate those endless quarrels which arose, regulates their marriages after the following manner: He takes a handsome female to himself alone; assigns one to every couple of inferior officers; and to five of the lowest rank he gives one wife in common.

The ancient BRITONS had a singular kind of marriage, to be met with among no other people. Any number of them, as ten or a dozen, joined in a society together, which was perhaps requisite for mutual defence in those barbarous times. In order to link this society the closer, they took an equal number of wives in common; and whatever children were born, were reputed to belong to all of them, and were accordingly provided for by the whole community.

Among the inferior creatures, nature herself, being the supreme legislator, prescribes all the laws which regulate their marriages, and varies those laws according to the different circumstances of the creature. Where she furnishes, with ease, food and defence to the new-born animal, the present embrace terminates the marriage; and the care of the offspring is committed entirely to the female. Where the food is of more difficult purchase, the marriage continues for one season, till the common progeny can provide for itself; and then the union immediately dissolves, and leaves each of the parties free to enter into a new engagement at the ensuing season. But nature, having endowed man with reason, has not so exactly regulated every article of his marriage-contract, but has left him to adjust them by his own

prudence, according to his particular circumſtances and ſituation. Municipal laws are a ſupply to the wiſdom of each individual; and, at the ſame time, by reſtraining the natural liberty of men, make private intereſt ſubmit to the intereſt of the public. All regulations, therefore, on this head are equally lawful, and equally conformable to the principles of nature; though they are not all equally convenient, or equally uſeful to ſociety. The laws may allow of polygamy, as among the *Eaſtern* nations; or of voluntary divorces, as among the GREEKS and ROMANS; or they may confine one man to one woman, during the whole courſe of their lives, as among the modern EUROPEANS. It may not be diſagreeable to conſider the advantages and diſadvantages which reſult from each of theſe inſtitutions.

The advocates for polygamy may recommend it as the only effectual remedy for the diſorders of love, and the only expedient for freeing men from that ſlavery to the females, which the natural violence of our paſſions has impoſed upon us. By this means alone can we regain our right of ſovereignty; and, ſating our appetite, re-eſtabliſh the authority of reaſon in our minds, and of conſequence our own authority in our families. Man, like a weak ſovereign, being unable to ſupport himſelf againſt the wiles and intrigues of his ſubjects, muſt play one faction againſt another, and become abſolute by the mutual jealouſy of the females. *To divide and to govern* is an univerſal maxim; and by neglecting it, the EUROPEANS undergo a more grievous and a more ignominious ſlavery than the TURKS or PERSIANS; who are ſubjected indeed to a ſovereign that lies at a diſtance from them, but in their domeſtic affairs rule with an uncontroulable ſway.

On the other hand, it may be urged with better reaſon, that this ſovereignty of the male is a real uſurpation, and deſtroys that nearneſs of rank, not to ſay equality, which nature has eſtabliſhed between the ſexes. We are by nature their lovers, their friends, their patrons:

Would

Would we willingly exchange such endearing appellations for the barbarous title of master and tyrant?

In what capacity shall we gain by this inhuman proceeding? As lovers, or as husbands? The *lover* is totally annihilated; and courtship, the most agreeable scene in life, can no longer have place where women have not the free disposal of themselves, but are bought and sold like the meanest animal. The *husband* is as little a gainer, having found the admirable secret of extinguishing every part of love, except its jealousy. No rose without its thorn; but he must be a foolish wretch indeed, that throws away the rose and preserves only the thorn.

But the Asiatic manners are as destructive to friendship as to love. Jealousy excludes men from all intimacies and familiarities with each other. No one dares bring his friend to his house or table, lest he bring a lover to his numerous wives. Hence all over the east, each family is as much separate from another, as if they were so many distinct kingdoms. No wonder then, that Solomon, living like an eastern prince, with his seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines, without one friend, could write so pathetically concerning the vanity of the world. Had he tried the secret of one wife or mistress, a few friends, and a great many companions, he might have found life somewhat more agreeable. Destroy love and friendship; what remains in the world worth accepting?

The bad education of children, especially children of condition, is another unavoidable consequence of these eastern institutions. Those who pass the early part of life among slaves, are only qualified to be themselves slaves and tyrants; and in every future intercourse, either with their inferiors or superiors, are apt to forget the natural equality of mankind. What attention, too, can it be supposed a parent, whose seraglio affords him fifty sons, will give to instilling principles of morality or science into a progeny with whom he himself is scarcely acquainted, and whom he loves with so divided an affec-

tion? Barbarism, therefore, appears from reason as well as experience, to be the inseparable attendant of polygamy.

To render polygamy more odious, I need not recount the frightful effects of jealousy, and the constraint in which it holds the fair sex all over the east. In those countries men are not allowed to have any commerce with the females, not even physicians, when sickness may be supposed to have extinguished all wanton passions in the bosoms of the fair, and at the same time has rendered them unfit objects of desire. TOURNEFORT tells us, that when he was brought into the *grand signior*'s seraglio as a physician, he was not a little surprized, in looking along a gallery, to see a great number of naked arms standing out from the sides of the room. He could not imagine what this could mean; till he was told, that those arms belonged to bodies which he must cure, without knowing any more about them than what he could learn from the arms. He was not allowed to ask a question of the patient, or even of her attendants, lest he might find it necessary to inquire concerning circumstances which the delicacy of the seraglio allows not to be revealed. Hence physicians in the east pretend to know all diseases from the pulse; as our quacks in EUROPE undertake to cure a person merely from seeing his water. I suppose, had *Monsieur* TOURNEFORT been of this latter kind, he would not, in CONSTANTINOPLE, have been allowed by the jealous TURKS to be furnished with materials requisite for exercising his art.

In another country, where polygamy is also allowed, they render their wives cripples, and make their feet of no use to them, in order to confine them to their own houses. But it will perhaps appear strange, that in a EUROPEAN country, jealousy can yet be carried to such a height, that it is indecent so much as to suppose that a woman of rank can have feet or legs. Witness the following story, which we have from very good authority *. When the mother of the late king of SPAIN was

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* *Memoires de la cour d'*ESPAGNE, *par Madame d'*AUNOY.

on her road towards Madrid, she passed through a little town in Spain, famous for its manufactory of gloves and stockings. The magistrates of the place thought they could not better express their joy for the reception of their new queen, than by presenting her with a sample of those commodities, for which alone their town was remarkable. The *major domo*, who conducted the princess, received the gloves very graciously; but when the stockings were presented, he flung them away with great indignation, and severely reprimanded the magistrates for this egregious piece of indecency. *Know*, says he, *that a queen of* Spain *has no legs*. The young queen, who at that time understood the language but imperfectly, and had often been frightened with stories of Spanish jealousy, imagined that they were to cut off her legs. Upon which she fell a crying, and begged them to conduct her back to Germany, for that she never could endure the operation; and it was with some difficulty they could appease her. Philip IV. is said never in his life to have laughed heartily but at the recital of this story.

Having rejected polygamy, and matched one man with one woman, let us now consider what duration we shall assign to their union, and whether we shall admit of those voluntary divorces which were customary among the Greeks and Romans. Those who would defend this practice may employ the following reasons.

How often does disgust and aversion arise after marriage from the most trivial accidents, or from an incompatibility of humour; where time, instead of curing the wounds proceeding from mutual injuries, festers them every day the more by new quarrels and reproaches? Let us separate hearts, which were not made to associate together. Each of them may, perhaps, find another for which it is better fitted. At least, nothing can be more cruel than to preserve by violence an union, which at first was made by mutual love, and is now in effect dissolved by mutual hatred.

But the liberty of divorces is not only a cure to hatred

tred and domeſtic quarrels; it is alſo an admirable preſervative againſt them, and the only ſecret for keeping alive that love which firſt united the married couple. The heart of man delights in liberty; the very image of conſtraint is grievous to it: When you would confine it by violence to what would otherwiſe have been its choice, the inclination immediately changes, and deſire is turned into averſion. If the public intereſt will not allow us to enjoy in polygamy that *variety* which is ſo agreeable in love; at leaſt deprive us not of that liberty which is ſo eſſentially requiſite. In vain you tell me, that I had my choice of the perſon with whom I would conjoin myſelf. I had my choice, it is true, of my priſon; but this is but a ſmall comfort, ſince it muſt ſtill be a priſon.

Such are the arguments which may be urged in favour of divorces: But there ſeem to be theſe three unanſwerable objections againſt them. *Firſt*, What muſt become of the children upon the ſeparation of the parents? Muſt they be committed to the care of a ſtepmother; and inſtead of the fond attention and concern of a parent, feel all the indifference or hatred of a ſtranger or an enemy? Theſe inconveniences are ſufficiently felt, where nature has made the divorce by the doom inevitable to all mortals: And ſhall we ſeek to multiply thoſe inconveniences, by multiplying divorces, and putting it in the power of parents, upon every caprice, to render their poſterity miſerable.

Secondly, If it be true, on the one hand, that the heart of man naturally delights in liberty, and hates every thing to which it is confined; it is alſo true, on the other, that the heart of man naturally ſubmits to neceſſity, and ſoon loſes an inclination when there appears an abſolute impoſſibility of gratifying it. Theſe principles of human nature, you'll ſay, are contradictory: But what is man but a heap of contradictions! Though it is remarkable, that where principles are, after this manner, contrary in their operation, they do not always deſtroy each other; but the one or the other

may

may predominate on any particular occaſion, according as circumſtances are more or leſs favourable to it. For inſtance, love is a reſtleſs and impatient paſſion, full of caprices and variations; ariſing in a moment from a feature, from an air, from nothing, and ſuddenly extinguiſhing after the ſame manner. Such a paſſion requires liberty above all things; and therefore Eloisa had reaſon, when, in order to preſerve this paſſion, ſhe refuſed to marry her beloved Abelard.

How oft, when preſt to marriage, have I ſaid,
Curſe on all laws but thoſe which love has made:
Love, free as air, at ſight of human ties,
Spreads his light wings, and in a moment flies.

But *friendſhip* is a calm and ſedate affection, conducted by reaſon and cemented by habit; ſpringing from long acquaintance and mutual obligations; without jealouſies or fears, and without thoſe feveriſh fits of heat and cold which cauſe ſuch an agreeable torment in the amorous paſſion. So ſober an affection, therefore, as friendſhip, rather thrives under conſtraint, and never riſes to ſuch a height as when any ſtrong intereſt or neceſſity binds two perſons together, and gives them ſome common object of purſuit. We need not, therefore, be afraid of drawing the marriage-knot, which chiefly ſubſiſts by friendſhip, the cloſeſt poſſible. The amity between the perſons, where it is ſolid and ſincere, will rather gain by it; and where it is wavering and uncertain, this is the beſt expedient for fixing it. How many frivolous quarrels and diſguſts are there, which people of common prudence endeavour to forget, when they lie under a neceſſity of paſſing their lives together; but which would ſoon be inflamed into the moſt deadly hatred, were they purſued to the utmoſt, under the proſpect of an eaſy ſeparation?

In the *third* place, we muſt conſider, that nothing is more dangerous than to unite two perſons ſo cloſely in all their intereſts and concerns, as man and wife, without rendering the union entire and total. The leaſt poſſibility of a ſeparate intereſt muſt be the ſource of end-

endleſs quarrels and ſuſpicions. The wife, not ſecure of her eſtabliſhment, will ſtill be driving ſome ſeparate end or project; and the huſband's ſelfiſhneſs, being accompanied with more power, may be ſtill more dangerous.

Should theſe reaſons againſt voluntary divorces be deemed inſufficient, I hope nobody will pretend to refuſe the teſtimony of experience. At the time when divorces were moſt frequent among the ROMANS, marriages were moſt rare; and AUGUSTUS was obliged, by penal laws, to force men of faſhion into the married ſtate: A circumſtance which is ſcarcely to be found in any other age or nation. The more ancient laws of ROME, which prohibited divorces, are extremely praiſed by DIONYSIUS HALYCARNASSÆUS *. Wonderful was the harmony, ſays the hiſtorian, which this inſeparable union of intereſts produced between married perſons; while each of them conſidered the inevitable neceſſity by which they were linked together, and abandoned all proſpect of any other choice or eſtabliſhment.

The excluſion of polygamy and divorces ſufficiently recommends our preſent EUROPEAN practice with regard to marriage.

ESSAY XX.

Of SIMPLICITY and REFINEMENT in WRITING.

FINE writing, according to Mr ADDISON, conſiſts of ſentiments which are natural, without being obvious. There cannot be a juſter and more conciſe definition of fine writing.

Sentiments, which are merely natural, affect not the mind

* Lib. ii.

mind with any pleaſure, and ſeem not worthy of our attention. The pleaſantries of a waterman, the obſervations of a peaſant, the ribaldry of a porter or hackney-coachman, all of theſe are natural and diſagreeable. What an inſipid comedy ſhould we make of the chit-chat of the tea-table, copied faithfully and at full length? Nothing can pleaſe perſons of taſte, but nature drawn with all her graces and ornaments *la belle nature;* or if we copy low life, the ſtrokes muſt be ſtrong and remarkable, and muſt convey a lively image to the mind. The abſurd *naïveté* of *Sancho Pancho* is repreſented in ſuch inimitable colours by Cervantes, that it entertains as much as the picture of the moſt magnanimous hero or ſofteſt lover.

The caſe is the ſame with orators, philoſophers, critics, or any author who ſpeaks in his own perſon, without introducing other ſpeakers or actors. If his language be not elegant, his obſervations uncommon, his ſenſe ſtrong and maſculine, he will in vain boaſt his nature and ſimplicity. He may be correct, but he never will be agreeable. It is the unhappineſs of ſuch authors, that they are never blamed or cenſured. The good fortune of a book, and that of a man, are not the ſame. The ſecret deceiving path of life, which Horace talks of, *fallentis ſemita vitæ*, may be the happieſt lot of the one, but is the greateſt misfortune which the other can poſſibly fall into.

On the other hand, productions which are merely ſurpriſing, without being natural, can never give any laſting entertainment to the mind. To draw chimeras, is not, properly ſpeaking, to copy or imitate. The juſtneſs of the repreſentation is loſt, and the mind is diſpleaſed to find a picture which bears no reſemblance to any original. Nor are ſuch exceſſive refinements more agreeable in the epiſtolary or philoſophic ſtyle than in the epic or tragic. Too much ornament is a fault in every kind of production. Uncommon expreſſions, ſtrong flaſhes of wit, pointed ſimilies, and epigrammatic turns, eſpecially when they recur too frequently, are a

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disfigurement rather than any embellishment of discourse. As the eye, in surveying a GOTHIC building, is distracted by the multiplicity of ornaments, and loses the whole by its minute attention to the parts; so the mind, in perusing a work overstocked with wit, is fatigued and disgusted with the constant endeavour to shine and surprise. This is the case where a writer overabounds in wit, even though that wit in itself should be just and agreeable. But it commonly happens to such writers, that they seek for their favourite ornaments, even where the subject does not afford them; and by that means have twenty insipid conceits for one thought which is really beautiful.

There is no subject in critical learning more copious, than this of the just mixture of simplicity and refinement in writing; and therefore, not to wander in too large a field, I shall confine myself to a few general observations on that head.

First, I observe, *That though excesses of both kinds are to be avoided, and though a proper medium ought to be studied in all productions; yet this medium lies not in a point, but admits of a considerable latitude.* Consider the wide distance, in this respect, between Mr POPE and LUCRETIUS. These seem to lie in the two greatest extremes of refinement and simplicity, in which a poet can indulge himself, without being guilty of any blameable excess. All this interval may be filled with poets who may differ from each other, but may be equally admirable, each in his peculiar style and manner. CORNEILLE and CONGREVE, who carry their wit and refinement somewhat farther than Mr POPE (if poets of so different a kind can be compared together), and SOPHOCLES and TERENCE, who are more simple than LUCRETIUS, seem to have gone out of that medium in which the most perfect productions are found, and to be guilty of some excess in these opposite characters. Of all the great poets, VIRGIL and RACINE, in my opinion, lie nearest the centre, and are the farthest removed from both the extremities.

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My *fecond* obſervation on this head is, *That it is very difficult, if not impoſſible, to explain by words, where the juſt medium lies between the exceſſes of ſimplicity and refinement, or to give any rule by which we can know preciſely the bounds between the fault and the beauty.* A critic may not only diſcourſe very judiciouſly on this head, without inſtructing his readers, but even without underſtanding the matter perfectly himſelf. There is not a finer piece of criticiſm than the *diſſertation on paſtorals* by Fontenelle; in which, by a number of reflections and philoſophical reaſonings, he endeavours to fix the juſt medium which is ſuitable to that ſpecies of writing. But let any one read the paſtorals of that author, and he will be convinced, that this judicious critic, notwithſtanding his fine reaſonings, had a falſe taſte, and fixed the point of perfection much nearer the extreme of refinement than paſtoral poetry will admit of. The ſentiments of his ſhepherds are better ſuited to the toilettes of Paris than to the foreſts of Arcadia. But this it is impoſſible to diſcover from his critical reaſonings. He blames all exceſſive painting and ornament as much as Virgil could have done, had that great poet writ a diſſertation on this ſpecies of poetry. However different the taſtes of men, their general diſcourſe on theſe ſubjects is commonly the ſame. No criticiſm can be inſtructive which deſcends not to particulars, and is not full of examples and illuſtrations. It is allowed on all hands, that beauty, as well as virtue, always lies in a medium; but where this medium is placed, is a great queſtion, and can never be ſufficiently explained by general reaſonings.

I ſhall deliver it as a *third* obſervation on this ſubject, *That we ought to be more on our guard againſt the exceſs of refinement than that of ſimplicity; and that becauſe the former exceſs is both leſs* beautiful *and more* dangerous *than the latter.*

It is a certain rule, that wit and paſſion are entirely incompatible. When the affections are moved, there is no place for the imagination. The mind of man being naturally limited, it is impoſſible that all its faculties can operate

operate at once; and the more any one predominates, the less room is there for the others to exert their vigour. For this reason a greater degree of simplicity is required in all compositions, where men, and actions, and passions are painted, than in such as consist of reflections and observations. And as the former species of writing is the more engaging and beautiful, one may safely, upon this account, give the preference to the extreme of simplicity above that of refinement.

We may also observe, that those compositions which we read the oftenest, and which every man of taste has got by heart, have the recommendation of simplicity, and have nothing surprising in the thought when divested of that elegance of expression, and harmony of numbers, with which it is clothed. If the merit of the composition lie in a point of wit, it may strike at first; but the mind anticipates the thought in the second perusal, and is no longer affected by it. When I read an epigram of MARTIAL, the first line recalls the whole; and I have no pleasure in repeating to myself what I know already. But each line, each word in CATULLUS, has its merit; and I am never tired with the perusal of him. It is sufficient to run over COWLEY once: But PARNEL, after the fiftieth reading, is as fresh as at the first. Besides, it is with books as with women, where a certain plainness of manner and of dress is more engaging, than that glare of paint and airs and apparel, which may dazzle the eye, but reaches not the affections. TERENCE is a modest and bashful beauty, to whom we grant every thing, because he assumes nothing, and whose purity and nature make a durable, though not a violent impression on us.

But refinement, as it is the less *beautiful*, so is it the more *dangerous* extreme, and what we are the apteſt to fall into. Simplicity passes for dulness, when it is not accompanied with great elegance and propriety. On the contrary, there is something surprising in a blaze of wit and conceit. Ordinary readers are mightily struck with it, and falsely imagine it to be the most difficult,

as well as moſt excellent way of writing. SENECA abounds with agreeable faults, ſays QUINTILIAN, *abundat dulcibus vitiis;* and for that reaſon is the more dangerous, and the more apt to pervert the taſte of the young and inconſiderate.

I ſhall add, that the exceſs of refinement is now more to be guarded againſt than ever; becauſe it is the extreme which men are the moſt apt to fall into, after learning has made ſome progreſs, and after eminent writers have appeared in every ſpecies of compoſition. The endeavour to pleaſe by novelty leads men wide of ſimplicity and nature, and fills their writings with affectation and conceit. It was thus the ASIATIC eloquence degenerated ſo much from the ATTIC: It was thus the age of CLAUDIUS and NERO became ſo much inferior to that of AUGUSTUS in taſte and genius; and perhaps there are, at preſent, ſome ſymptoms of a like degeneracy of taſte in FRANCE as well as in ENGLAND.

ESSAY XXI.

OF NATIONAL CHARACTERS.

THE vulgar are apt to carry all *national characters* to extremes; and having once eſtabliſhed it as a principle, that any people are knaviſh, or cowardly, or ignorant, they will admit of no exception, but comprehend every individual under the ſame cenſure. Men of ſenſe condemn theſe undiſtinguiſhing judgements; though, at the ſame time, they allow, that each nation has a peculiar ſet of manners, and that ſome particular qualities are more frequently to be met with among one people than among their neighbours.

bours. The common people in SWITZERLAND have probably more honesty than those of the same rank in IRELAND; and every prudent man will, from that circumstance alone, make a difference in the trust which he reposes in each. We have reason to expect greater wit and gaiety in a FRENCHMAN than in a SPANIARD; though CERVANTES was born in SPAIN. An ENGLISHMAN will naturally be supposed to have more knowledge than a DANE; though TYCHO BRAHE was a native of DENMARK.

Different reasons are assigned for these *national characters;* while some account for them from *moral*, others from *physical* causes. By *moral* causes, I mean all circumstances which are fitted to work on the mind as motives or reasons, and which render a peculiar set of manners habitual to us. Of this kind are, the nature of the government, the revolutions of public affairs, the plenty or penury in which the people live, the situation of the nation with regard to its neighbours, and such like circumstances. By *physical* causes, I mean those qualities of the air and climate which are supposed to work insensibly on the temper, by altering the tone and habit of the body, and giving a particular complexion, which, though reflection and reason may sometimes overcome it, will yet prevail among the generality of mankind, and have an influence on their manners.

That the character of a nation will much depend on *moral* causes, must be evident to the most superficial observer; since a nation is nothing but a collection of individuals, and the manners of individuals are frequently determined by these causes. As poverty and hard labour debase the minds of the common people, and render them unfit for any science and ingenious profession; so where any government becomes very oppressive to all its subjects, it must have a proportional effect on their temper and genius, and must banish all the liberal arts from among them.

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The ſame principle of moral cauſes fixes the character of different profeſſions, and alters even that diſpoſition which the particular members receive from the hand of nature. A *ſoldier* and a *prieſt* are different characters, in all nations, and all ages; and this difference is founded on circumſtances, whoſe operation is eternal and unalterable.

The uncertainty of their life makes ſoldiers laviſh and generous, as well as brave: Their idleneſs, together with the large ſocieties, which they form in camps or garriſons, inclines them to pleaſure and gallantry: By their frequent change of company, they acquire good breeding and an openneſs of behaviour: Being employed only againſt a public and an open enemy, they become candid, honeſt, and undeſigning: And as they uſe more the labour of the body than that of the mind, they are commonly thoughtleſs and ignorant*.

It is a trite, but not altogether a falſe maxim, that *prieſts of all religions are the ſame;* and though the character of the profeſſion will not, in every inſtance, prevail over the perſonal character, yet is it ſure always to predominate with the greater number. For as chymiſts obſerve, that ſpirits, when raiſed to a certain height, are all the ſame, from whatever materials they be extracted; ſo theſe men, being elevated above humanity, acquire a uniform character, which is entirely their own, and which, in my opinion, is, generally ſpeaking, not the moſt amiable that is to be met with in human ſociety. It is in moſt points oppoſite to that of a ſoldier; as is the way of life from which it is derived †.

As to *phyſical cauſes*, I am inclined to doubt altogether of their operation in this particular; nor do I think that men owe any thing of their temper or genius to the air, food, or climate. I confeſs, that the contrary opinion may juſtly, at firſt ſight, ſeem probable; ſince we find, that theſe circumſtances have

* See NOTE [H]. † See NOTE [I].

an influence over every other animal, and that even thoſe creatures, which are fitted to live in all climates, ſuch as dogs, horſes, &c. do not attain the ſame perfection in all. The courage of bull-dogs and game-cocks ſeem peculiar to ENGLAND. FLANDERS is remarkable for large and heavy horſes: SPAIN for horſes light and of good mettle. And any breed of theſe creatures, tranſplanted from one country to another, will ſoon loſe the qualities which they derived from their native climate. It may be aſked, why not the ſame with men*?

There are few queſtions more curious than this, which will oftener occur in our enquiries concerning human affairs; and therefore it may be proper to give it a full examination.

The human mind is of a very imitative nature; nor is it poſſible for any ſet of men to converſe often together, without acquiring a ſimilitude of manners, and communicating to each other their vices as well as virtues. The propenſity to company and ſociety is ſtrong in all rational creatures; and the ſame diſpoſition which gives us this propenſity, makes us enter deeply into each others ſentiments, and cauſes like paſſions and inclinations to run, as it were, by contagion, through the whole club or knot of companions. Where a number of men are united into one political body, the occaſions of their intercourſe muſt be ſo frequent, for defence, commerce, and government, that, together with the ſame ſpeech or language, they muſt acquire a reſemblance in their manners, and have a common or national character, as well as a perſonal one, peculiar to each individual. Now though nature produces all kinds of temper and underſtanding in great abundance, it does not follow, that ſhe always produces them in like proportions, and that in every ſociety the ingredients of induſtry and indolence, valour and cowardice, humanity and brutality, wiſdom and folly, will be mixed after the ſame

* See NOTE [K].

ſame manner. In the infancy of ſociety, if any of theſe diſpoſitions be found in greater abundance than the reſt, it will naturally prevail in the compoſition, and give a tincture to the national character. Or ſhould it be aſſerted, that no ſpecies of temper can reaſonably be preſumed to predominate, even in thoſe contracted ſocieties, and that the ſame proportions will always be preſerved in the mixture; yet ſurely the perſons in credit and authority, being ſtill a more contracted body, cannot always be preſumed to be of the ſame character; and their influence on the manners of the people, muſt, at all times, be very conſiderable. If, on the firſt eſtabliſhment of a republic, a Brutus ſhould be placed in authority, and be tranſported with ſuch enthuſiaſm for liberty and public good, as to overlook all the ties of nature, as well as private intereſt, ſuch an illuſtrious example will naturally have an effect on the whole ſociety, and kindle the ſame paſſion in every boſom. Whatever it be that forms the manners of one generation, the next muſt imbibe a deeper tincture of the ſame dye; men being more ſuſceptible of all impreſſions during infancy, and retaining theſe impreſſions as long as they remain in the world. I aſſert, then, that all national characters, where they depend not on fixed *moral* cauſes, proceed from ſuch accidents as theſe, and that phyſical cauſes have no diſcernible operation on the human mind. It is a maxim in all philoſophy, that cauſes, which do not appear, are to be conſidered as not exiſting.

If we run over the globe, or revolve the annals of hiſtory, we ſhall diſcover every where ſigns of a ſympathy or contagion of manners, none of the influence of air or climate.

Firſt. We may obſerve, that, where a very extenſive government has been eſtabliſhed for many centuries, it ſpreads a national character over the whole empire, and communicates to every part a ſimilarity of manners. Thus the Chinese have the greateſt

uniformity of character imaginable: Though the air and climate, in different parts of thoſe vaſt dominions, admit of very conſiderable variations.

Secondly. In ſmall governments, which are contiguous, the people have notwithſtanding a different character, and are often as diſtinguiſhable in their manners as the moſt diſtant nations. ATHENS and THEBES were but a ſhort day's jonrney from each other; though the ATHENIANS were as remarkable for ingenuity, politeneſs, and gaiety, as the THEBANS for dulneſs, ruſticity, and a phlegmatic temper. PLUTARCH, diſcourſing of the effects of air on the minds of men, obſerves, that the inhabitants of the PIRÆUM poſſeſſed very different tempers from thoſe of the higher town in ATHENS, which was diſtant about four miles from the former: But I believe no one attributes the difference of manners in WAPPING and St. JAMES's to a difference of air or climate.

Thirdly. The ſame national character commonly follows the authority of government to a preciſe boundary; and upon croſſing a river, or paſſing a mountain, one finds a new ſet of manners, with a new government. The LANGUEDOCIANS and GASCONS are the gayeſt people in FRANCE; but whenever you paſs the PYRENEES, you are among SPANIARDS. Is it conceivable, that the qualities of the air ſhould change exactly with the limits of an empire, which depend ſo much on the accidents of battles, negociations, and marriages?

Fourthly. Where any ſet of men, ſcattered over diſtant nations, maintain a cloſe ſociety or communication together, they acquire a ſimilitude of manners, and have but little in common with the nations amongſt whom they live. Thus the JEWS in EUROPE, and the ARMINIANS in the EAST, have a peculiar character; and the former are as much noted for fraud as the latter for probity*. The *Jeſuits*, in all *Roman*

*See NOTE [L].

Roman-catholic countries, are alſo obſerved to have a character peculiar to themſelves.

Fifthly. Where any accident, as a difference in language or religion, keeps two nations, inhabiting the ſame country, from mixing with each other, they will preſerve, during ſeveral centuries, a diſtinct and even oppoſite ſet of manners. The integrity, gravity, and bravery of the Turks, form an exact contraſt to the deceit, levity, and cowardice of the modern Greeks.

Sixthly. The ſame ſet of manners will follow a nation, and adhere to them over the whole globe, as well as the ſame laws and language. The Spanish, English, French, and Dutch colonies, are all diſtinguiſhed even between the tropics.

Seventhly. The manners of a people change very conſiderably from one age to another; either by great alterations in their government, by the mixtures of new people, or by that inconſtancy to which all human affairs are ſubject. The ingenuity, induſtry, and activity of the ancient Greeks, have nothing in common with the ſtupidity and indolence of the preſent inhabitants of thoſe regions. Candour, bravery, and love of liberty formed the character of the ancient Romans; as ſubtilty, cowardice, and a ſlaviſh diſpoſition do that of the modern. The old Spaniards were reſtleſs, turbulent, and ſo addicted to war, that many of them killed themſelves when deprived of their arms by the Romans†. One would find an equal difficulty at preſent (at leaſt one would have found it fifty years ago), to rouze up the modern Spaniards to arms. The Batavians were all ſoldiers of fortune, and hired themſelves into the Roman armies. Their poſterity make uſe of foreigners for the ſame purpoſe that the Romans did their anceſtors. Though ſome few ſtrokes of the French character be the ſame with that which Cæsar has aſcribed to the Gauls; yet what compariſon between

† Tit. Livii, lib. xxxiv. chap. 17.

the civility, humanity, and knowledge of the modern inhabitants of that country, and the ignorance, barbarity, and groſſneſs of the ancient? Not to inſiſt upon the great difference between the preſent poſſeſſors of BRITAIN, and thoſe before the ROMAN conqueſt; we may obſerve that our anceſtors, a few centuries ago, were ſunk into the moſt abject ſuperſtition: laſt century they were inflamed with the moſt furious enthuſiaſm, and are now ſettled into the moſt cool indifference, with regard to religious matters, that is to be found in any nation of the world.

Eighthly. Where ſeveral neighbouring nations have a very cloſe communication together, either by policy, commerce, or travelling, they acquire a ſimilitude of manners proportioned to the communication. Thus all the FRANKS appear to have a uniform character to the eaſtern nations. The differences among them are like the peculiar accents of different provinces, which are not diſtinguiſhable, except by an ear accuſtomed to them, and which commonly eſcape a foreigner.

Ninthly. We may often remark a wonderful mixture of manners and characters in the ſame nation, ſpeaking the ſame language, and ſubject to the ſame government: And in this particular the ENGLISH are the moſt remarkable of any people that perhaps ever were in the world. Nor is this to be aſcribed to the mutability and uncertainty of their climate, or to any other *phyſical* cauſes; ſince all theſe cauſes take place in the neighbouring country of SCOTLAND, without having the ſame effect. Where the government of a nation is altogether republican, it is apt to beget a peculiar ſet of manners. Where it is altogether monarchial, it is more apt to have the ſame effect; the imitation of ſuperiors ſpreading the national manners faſter among the people. If the governing part of a ſtate conſiſts altogether of merchants, as in HOLLAND, their uniform way of life will fix their character, If it conſiſts chiefly of nobles and landed gentry.

like Germany, France, and Spain, the effect follows. The genius of a particular sect or religion is also apt to mould the manners of a people. But the English government is a mixture of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy. The people in authority are composed of gentry and merchants. All sects of religion are to be found among them. And the great liberty and independency which every man enjoys, allows him to display the manners peculiar to him. Hence the English, of any people in the universe, have the least of a national character; unless this very singularity may pass for such.

If the characters of men depended on the air and climate, the degrees of heat and cold should naturally be expected to have a mighty influence; since nothing has a greater effect on all plants and irrational animals. And indeed there is some reason to think, that all the nations which live beyond the polar circles, or between the tropics, are inferior to the rest of the species, and are incapable of all the higher attainments of the human mind. The poverty and misery of the northern inhabitants of the globe, and the indolence of the southern, from their few necessities, may, perhaps, account for this remarkable difference, without having recourse to *physical* causes. This however is certain, that the characters of nations are very promiscuous in the temperate climates, and that almost all the general observations, which have been formed of the more southern or more northern people in these climates, are found to be uncertain and fallacious*.

Shall we say, that the neighbourhood of the sun inflames the imagination of men, and gives it a peculiar spirit and vivacity? The French, Greeks, Egyptians, and Persians are remarkable for gaiety. The Spaniards, Turks, and Chinese are noted for gravity, and a serious deportment without any such difference of climate as to produce this difference of temper. The

* See NOTE [M].

The GREEKS and ROMANS, who called all other nations barbarians, confined genius and a fine underſtanding to the more ſouthern climates, and pronounced the northern nations incapable of all knowledge and civility; but our iſland has produced as great men, either for action or learning, as GREECE or ITALY has to boaſt of.

It is pretended, that the ſentiments of men become more delicate as the country approaches nearer to the ſun; and that the taſte of beauty and elegance receives proportional improvements in every latitude; as we may particularly obſerve of the languages, of which the more ſouthern are ſmoooth and melodious, the northern harſh and untuneable. But this obſervation holds not univerſally. The ARABIC is uncouth and diſagreeable: The MUSCOVITE ſoft and muſical. Energy, ſtrength, and harſhneſs form the character of the LATIN tongue: The ITALIAN is the moſt liquid, ſmooth, and effeminate language that can poſſibly be imagined. Every language will depend ſomewhat on the manners of the people; but much more on that original ſtock of words and ſounds which they received from their anceſtors, and which remain unchangeable, even while their manners admit of the greateſt alterations. Who can doubt, but the ENGLISH are at preſent a more polite and knowing people than the GREEKS were for ſeveral ages after the ſiege of TROY? Yet is there no compariſon between the language of MILTON and that of HOMER. Nay, the greater are the alterations and improvements, which happen in the manners of a people, the leſs can be expected in their language. A few eminent and refined geniuſes will communicate their taſte and knowledge to a whole people, and produce the greateſt improvements; but they fix the tongue by their writings, and prevent, in ſome degree, its farther changes.

Lord BACON has obſerved, that the inhabitants of the ſouth are, in general, more ingenious than thoſe

of the north; but that, where the native of a cold climate has genius, he rises to a higher pitch than can be reached by the southern wits. This observation a late* writer confirms, by comparing the southern wits to cucumbers, which are commonly all good in their kind; but at best are an insipid fruit: While the northern geniuses are like melons, of which not one in fifty is good; but when it is so, it has an exquisite relish. I believe this remark may be allowed just, when confined to the EUROPEAN nations, and to the present age, or rather to the preceding one; but I think it may be accounted for from moral causes. All the sciences and liberal arts have been imported to us from the south; and it is easy to imagine, that in the first order of application, when excited by emulation and by glory, the few, who were addicted to them, would carry them to the greatest height, and stretch every nerve, and every faculty, to reach the pinnacle of perfection. Such illustrious examples spread knowledge every where, and begot an universal esteem for the sciences: After which, it is no wonder that industry relaxes; while men meet not with suitable encouragement, nor arrive at such distinction by their attainments. The universal diffusion of learning among a people, and the entire banishment of gross ignorance and rusticity, is, therefore, seldom attended with any remarkable perfection in particular persons. It seems to be taken for granted in the dialogue *de Oratoribus*, that knowledge was much more common in VESPASIAN's age than in that of CICERO and AUGUSTUS. QUINTILIAN also complains of the profanation of learning, by its becoming too common. "Formerly," says JUVENAL, "science was confined to "GREECE and ITALY. Now the whole world emu"lates ATHENS and ROME. Eloquent GAUL has taught "BRITAIN, knowing in the laws. Even THULE enter"tains thoughts of hiring rhetoricians for its in"struction.

* Dr Berkley: Minute Philosopher.

"ſtruction*." This ſtate of learning is remarkabe; becauſe JUVENAL is himſelf the laſt of the ROMAN writers that poſſeſſed any degree of genius. Thoſe who ſucceeded are valued for nothing but the matters of fact, of which they give us information. I hope the late converſion of MUSCOVY to the ſtudy of the ſciences will not prove a like prognoſtic to the preſent period of learning.

Cardinal BENTIVOGLIO gives the preference to the northern nations above the ſouthern with regard to candour and ſincerity; and mentions, on the one hand, the SPANIARDS and ITALIANS, and on the other, the FLEMINGS and GERMANS. But I am apt to think, that this has happened by accident. The ancient ROMANS ſeem to have been a candid ſincere people, as are the modern TURKS. But if we muſt needs ſuppoſe, that this event has ariſen from fixed cauſes, we may only conclude from it, that all extremes are apt to concur, and are commonly attended with the ſame conſequences, Treachery is the uſual concomitant of ignorance and barbariſm; and if civilized nations ever embrace ſubtle and crooked politics, it is from an exceſs of refinement, which makes them diſdain the plain direct path to power and glory.

Moſt conqueſts have gone from north to ſouth; and it has hence been inferred, that the northern nations poſſeſs a ſuperior degree of courage and ferocity. But it would have been juſter to have ſaid, that moſt conqueſts are made by poverty and want upon plenty and riches. The SARACENS, leaving the deſerts of ARABIA, carried their conqueſts northwards upon all the fertile provinces of the ROMAN empire; and met the TURKS half way, who were coming ſouthwards from the deſerts of TARTARY.

An

* "Sed Cantaber unde
Stoicus? antiqui præſertim ætate Metelli.
Nunc totus GRAIAS, noſtraſque habet orbis ATHENAS.
GALLIA cauſidicos docuit facunda BRITANNOS:
De conducendo loquitur jam rhetore THULE." Sat. 15.

An eminent writer* has remarked, that all courageous animals are alſo carnivorous, and that greater courage is to be expected in a people, ſuch as the English, whoſe food is ſtrong and hearty, than in the half-ſtarved commonalty of other countries. But the Swedes, notwithſtanding their diſadvantages in this particular, are not inferior, in martial courage, to any nation that ever was in the world.

In general, we may obſerve, that courage, of all national qualities, is the moſt precarious; becauſe it is exerted only at intervals, and by a few in every nation; whereas induſtry, knowledge, civility, may be of conſtant and univerſal uſe, and, for ſeveral ages, may become habitual to the whole people. If courage be preſerved, it muſt be by diſcipline, example, and opinion. The tenth legion of Cæsar, and the regiment of Picardy in France, were formed promiſcuouſly from among the citizens: but having once entertained a notion, that they were the beſt troops in the ſervice, this very opinion really made them ſuch.

As a proof how much courage depends on opinion, we may obſerve, that, of the two chief tribes of the Greeks, the Dorins and Ionians, the former were always eſteemed, and always appeared, more brave and manly than the latter; though the colonies of both the tribes were interſperſed and intermingled throughout all the extent of Greece, the Leſſer Asia, Sicily, Italy, and the iſlands of the Ægean ſea. The Athenians were the only Ionians that ever had any reputation for valour or military atchievements; though even theſe were deemed inferior to the Lacedemonians, the braveſt of the Dorians.

The only obſervation, with regard to the difference of men in different climates, on which we can reſt any weight, is the vulgar one, that people in the northern regions have a greater inclination to ſtrong liquors,

* Sir William Temple's Account of the Netherlands.

liquors, and thoſe in the ſouthern to love and women. One can aſſign a very probable *phyſical* cauſe for this difference. Wine and diſtilled waters warm the frozen blood in the colder climates, and fortify men againſt the injuries of the weather: As the genial heat of the ſun, in the countries expoſed to his beams, inflames the blood, and exalts the paſſion between the ſexes.

Perhaps, too, the matter may be accounted for by *moral* cauſes. All ſtrong liquors are rarer in the north, and conſequently are more coveted. DIODORUS SICULUS * tells us, that the GAULS in his time were great drunkards, and much addicted to wine; chiefly, I ſuppoſe, from its rarity and novelty. On the other hand, the heat in the ſouthern climates, obliging men and women to go half naked, thereby renders their frequent commerce more dangerous, and inflames their mutual paſſion. This makes parents and huſbands more jealous and reſerved: which ſtill farther inflames the paſſion. Not to mention, that, as women ripen ſooner in the ſouthern regions, it is neceſſary to obſerve greater jealouſy and care in their education; it being evident, that a girl of twelve cannot poſſeſs equal diſcretion to govern this paſſion, with one who feels not its violence till ſhe be ſeventeen or eighteen. Nothing ſo much encourages the paſſion of love as eaſe and leiſure, or is more deſtructive to it than induſtry and hard labour; and as the neceſſities of men are evidently fewer in the warm climates than in the cold ones, this circumſtance alone may make a conſiderable difference between them.

But perhaps the fact is doubtful, that nature has, either from moral or phyſical cauſes, diſtributed theſe

* *Lib.* v. The ſame author aſcribes taciturnity to that people; a new proof that national characters may alter very much. Taciturnity, as a national character, implies unſociableneſs. ARISTOTLE, in his politics, book ii. cap. 2. ſays, that the GAULS are the only warlike nation who are negligent of women.

theſe reſpective inclinations to the different climates. The ancient Greeks, though born in a warm climate, ſeem to have been much addicted to the bottle; nor were their parties of pleaſure any thing but matches of drinking among men, who paſſed their time altogether apart from the fair. Yet when Alexander led the Greeks into Persia, a ſtill more ſouthern climate, they multiplied their debauches of this kind, in imitation of the Persian manners *. So honourable was the character of a drunkard among the Persians, that Cyrus the younger, ſoliciting the ſober Lacedemonians for ſuccour againſt his brother Artaxerxes, claims it chiefly on account of his ſuperior endowments, as more valorous, more bountiful, and a better drinker †. Darius Hiſtaspes made it be inſcribed on his tombſtone, among his other virtues and princely qualities, that no one could bear a greater quantity of liquor. You may obtain any thing of the Negroes by offering them ſtrong drink; and may eaſily prevail with them to ſell, not only their children, but their wives and miſtreſſes, for a caſk of brandy. In France and Italy few drink pure wine, except in the greateſt heats of ſummer; and, indeed, it is then almoſt as neceſſary, in order to recruit the ſpirits, evaporated by heat, as it is in Sweden, during the winter, in order to warm the bodies congealed by the rigour of the ſeaſon.

If jealouſy be regarded as a proof of an amorous diſpoſition, no people were more jealous than the Muscovites, before their communication with Europe had ſomewhat altered their manners in this particular.

But ſuppoſing the fact true, that nature, by phyſical principals, has regularly diſtributed theſe two paſſions, the one to the northern, the other to the ſouthern

* Babalonii *maximè in vinum, & quæ ebrietatem ſequuntur, effuſi ſunt.* Quint. Cur. lib. v. cap. 1.

† Plut. Symp. lib. i. quæſt. 4.

ſouthern regions; we can only infer, that the climate may affect the groſſer and more bodily organs of our frame; not that it can work upon thoſe finer organs, on which the operations of the mind and underſtanding depend. And this is agreeable to the analogy of nature. The races of animals never degenerate when carefully tended; and horſes, in particular, always ſhow their blood in their ſhape, ſpirit, and ſwiftneſs: But a coxcomb may beget a philoſopher; as a man of virtue may leave a worthleſs progeny.

I ſhall conclude this ſubject with obſerving, that though the paſſion for liquor be more brutal and debaſing than love, which, when properly managed, is the ſource of all politeneſs and refinement; yet this gives not ſo great an advantage to the ſouthern climates, as we may be apt at firſt ſight to imagine. When love goes beyond a certain pitch, it renders men jealous, and cuts off the free intercourſe between the ſexes, on which the politeneſs of a nation will commonly much depend. And if we would ſubtilize and refine upon this point, we might obſerve, that the people, in very temperate climates, are the moſt likely to attain all ſorts of improvement; their blood not being ſo inflamed as to render them jealous, and yet being warm enough to make them ſet a due value on the charms and endowments of the fair ſex.

ESSAY

ESSAY XXII.

Of TRAGEDY.

IT ſeems an unaccountable pleaſure, which the ſpectators of a well written tragedy receive from ſorrow, terror, anxiety, and other paſſions, that are in themſelves diſagreeable and uneaſy. The more they are touched and affected, the more are they delighted with the ſpectacle; and as ſoon as the uneaſy paſſions ceaſe to operate, the piece is at an end. One ſcene of full joy and contentment and ſecurity, is the utmoſt that any compoſition of this kind can bear; and it is ſure always to be the concluding one. If, in the texture of the piece, there be interwoven any ſcenes of ſatisfaction, they afford only faint gleams of pleaſure, which are thrown in by way of variety, and in order to plunge the actors into deeper diſtreſs, by means of that contraſt and diſappointment. The whole art of the poet is employed, in rouzing and ſupporting the compaſſion and indignation, the anxiety and reſentment, of his audience. They are pleaſed in proportion as they are afflicted; and never are ſo happy as when they employ tears, ſobs, and cries, to give vent to their ſorrow, and relieve their heart, ſwoln with the tendereſt ſympathy and compaſſion.

The few critics who have had ſome tincture of philoſophy, have remarked this ſingular phænomenon, and have endeavoured to account for it.

L'Abbé DUBOS, in his reflections on poetry and painting, aſſerts, that nothing is in general ſo diſagreeable to the mind as the languid, liſtleſs ſtate of indolence, into which it falls upon the removal of all paſſion and occupation. To get rid of this painful ſituation, it ſeeks every amuſement and purſuit;

 buſineſs,

buſineſs, gaming, ſhews, executions; whatever will rouſe the paſſions, and take its attention from itſelf. No matter what the paſſion is: Let it be diſagreeable, afflicting, melancholy, diſordered; it is ſtill better than that inſipid languor, which ariſes from perfect tranquillity and repoſe.

It is impoſſible not to admit this account, as being, at leaſt in part, ſatisfactory. You may obſerve, when there are ſeveral tables of gaming, that all the company run to thoſe where the deepeſt play is, even though they find not there the beſt players. The view, or, at leaſt, imagination of high paſſions, ariſing from great loſs or gain, affects the ſpectator by ſympathy, gives him ſome touches of the ſame paſſions, and ſerves him for a momentary entertainment. It makes the time paſs the eaſier with him, and is ſome relief to that oppreſſion under which men commonly labour, when left entirely to their own thoughts and meditations.

We find that common liars always magnify, in their narrations, all kinds of danger, pain, diſtreſs, ſickneſs, deaths, murders, and cruelties; as well as joy, beauty, mirth, and magnificence. It is an abſurd ſecret, which they have for pleaſing their company, fixing their attention, and attaching them to ſuch marvellous relations, by the paſſions and emotions which they excite.

There is, however, a difficulty in applying to the preſent ſubject, in its full extent, this ſolution, however ingenious and ſatisfactory it may appear. It is certain, that the ſame object of diſtreſs, which pleaſes in a tragedy, were it really ſet before us, would give the moſt unfeigned uneaſineſs; though it be then the moſt effectual cure to languor and indolence. Monſieur FONTENELLE ſeems to have been ſenſible of this difficulty; and accordingly attempts another ſolution of the phænomenon; at leaſt makes ſome addition to the theory above mentioned *.

" Pleaſure

* Reflexions ſur la poëtique, § 36.

" Pleasure and pain," says he " which are two " sentiments so different in themselves, differ not so " much in their cause. From the instances of tick- " ling, it appears, that the movement of pleasure, " pushed a little too far, becomes pain; and that " the movement of pain, a little moderated, becomes " pleasure. Hence it proceeds, that there is such a " thing as a sorrow, soft and agreeable: It is a pain " weakened and diminished. The heart likes na- " turally to be moved and affected. Melancholy " objects suit it, and even disastrous and sorrowful, " provided they are softened by some circumstance. " It is certain, that, on the theatre, the represenla- " tion has almost the effect of reality; yet it has " not altogether that effect. However we may be " hurried away by the spectacle; whatever domi- " nion the senses and imagination may usurp over " the reason, there still lurks at the bottom a certain " idea of falsehood in the whole of what we see. " This idea, though weak and disguised, suffices to " diminish the pain which we suffer from the misfor- " tunes of those whom we love, and to reduce that " affliction to such a pitch as converts it into a plea- " sure. We weep for the misfortunes of a hero to " whom we are attached. In the same instant we " comfort ourselves, by reflecting, that it is nothing " but a fiction: And it is precisely that mixture of " sentiments which composes an agreeable sorrow, " and tears that delight us. But as that affliction, " which is caused by exterior and sensible objects, is " stronger than the consolation which arises from an " internal reflection, they are the effects and symp- " toms of sorrow, that ought to predominate in the " composition."

This solution seems just and convincing; but per- haps it wants still some new addition, in order to make it answer fully the phænomenon which we here examine. All the passions excited by eloquence are agreeable in the highest degree, as well as those

which are moved by painting and the theatre. The epilogues of CICERO are, on this account chiefly, the delight of every reader of taſte; and it is difficult to read ſome of them without the deepeſt ſympathy and ſorrow. His merit as an orator, no doubt, depends much on his ſucceſs in this particular. When he had raiſed tears in his judges and all his audience, they were then the moſt highly delighted, and expreſſed the greateſt ſatisfaction with the pleader. The pathetic deſcription of the butchery, made by VERRES of the SICILIAN captains, is a maſterpiece of this kind: But I believe none will affirm, that the being preſent at a melancholy ſcene of that nature would afford any entertainment. Neither is the ſorrow here ſoftened by fiction: For the audience were convinced of the reality of every circumſtance. What is it then, which in this caſe raiſes a pleaſure from the boſom of uneaſineſs, ſo to ſpeak; and a pleaſure, which ſtill retains all the features and outward ſymptoms of diſtreſs and ſorrow?

I anſwer: This extraordinary effect proceeds from that very eloquence with which the melancholy ſcene is repreſented. The genius required to paint objects in a lively manner, the art employed in collecting all the pathetic circumſtances, the judgment diſplayed in diſpoſing them: the exerciſe, I ſay, of theſe noble talents, together with the force of expreſſion, and beauty of oratorial numbers, diffuſe the higheſt ſatisfaction on the audience, and excite the moſt delightful movements. By this means, the uneaſineſs of the melancholy paſſions is not only overpowered and effaced by ſomething ſtronger of an oppoſite kind; but the whole impulſe of thoſe paſſions is converted into pleaſure, and ſwells the delight which the eloquence raiſes in us. The ſame force of oratory employed on an unintereſting ſubject, would not pleaſe half ſo much, or rather would appear altogether ridiculous; and the mind, being left in abſolute calmneſs and indifference, would reliſh none of thoſe

thoſe beauties of imagination or expreſſion, which, if joined to paſſion, give it ſuch exquiſite entertainment. The impulſe or vehemence, ariſing from ſorrow, compaſſion, indignation, receives a new direction from the ſentiments of beauty. The latter, being the predominant emotion, ſeize the whole mind, and convert the former into themſelves, at leaſt tincture them ſo ſtrongly as totally to alter their nature. And the ſoul, being, at the ſame time, rouzed by paſſion, and charmed by eloquence, feels on the whole a ſtrong movement which is altogether delightful.

The ſame principle takes place in tragedy; with this addition, that tragedy is an imitation; and imitation is always of itſelf agreeable. This circumſtance ſerves ſtill farther to ſmooth the motions of paſſion, and convert the whole feeling into one uniform and ſtrong enjoyment. Objects of the greateſt terror and diſtreſs pleaſe in painting, and pleaſe more than the moſt beautiful objects, that appear calm and indifferent*. The affection, rouzing the mind, excites a large ſtock of ſpirit and vehemence; which is all transformed into pleaſure by the force of the prevailing movement. It is thus the fiction of tragedy ſoftens the paſſion, by an infuſion of a new feeling, not merely by weakening or diminiſhing the ſorrow. You may by degrees weaken a real ſorrow, till it totally diſappears; yet in none of its gradations will it ever give pleaſure; except, perhaps, by accident, to a man ſunk under lethargic indolence, whom it rouzes from that languid ſtate.

To confirm this theory, it will be ſufficient to produce other inſtances, where the ſubordinate movement is converted into the predominant, and gives force to it, though of a different, and even ſometimes though of a contrary nature.

Novelty naturally rouzes the mind, and attracts our attention; and the movements, which it cauſes, are always converted into any paſſion belonging to

* See NOTE [N].

the object, and join their force to it. Whether an event excite joy or ſorrow, pride or ſhame, anger or good-will, it is ſure to produce a ſtronger affection, when new or unuſual. And though novelty of itſelf be agreeable, it fortifies the painful, as well as agreeable paſſions.

Had you any intention to move a perſon extremely by the narration of any event, the beſt method of encreaſing its effect would be artfully to delay informing him of it, and firſt to excite his curioſity and impatience before you let him into the ſecret. This is the artifice practiſed by IAGO in the famous ſcene of SHAKESPEARE; and every ſpectator is ſenſible, that OTHELLO's jealouſy acquires additional force from his preceding impatience, and that the ſubordinate paſſion is here readily transformed into the predominant one.

Difficulties encreaſe paſſions of every kind; and by rouzing our attention, and exciting our active powers, they produce an emotion which nouriſhes the prevailing affection.

Parents commonly love that child moſt, whoſe ſickly infirm frame of body has occaſioned them the greateſt pains, trouble, and anxiety in rearing him. The agreeable ſentiment of affection here acquires force from ſentiments of uneaſineſs.

Nothing endears ſo much a friend as ſorrow for his death. The pleaſure of his company has not ſo powerful an influence.

Jealouſy is a painful paſſion; yet without ſome ſhare of it, the agreeable affection of love has difficulty to ſubſiſt in its full force and violence. Abſence is alſo a great ſource of complaint among lovers, and gives them the greateſt uneaſineſs: Yet nothing is more favourable to their mutual paſſion than ſhort intervals of that kind: And if long intervals often prove fatal, it is only becauſe, through time, men are accuſtomed to them, and they ceaſe to give uneaſineſs. Jealouſy and abſence in love compoſe the *dolce peccante*

peccante of the ITALIANS, which they ſuppoſe ſo eſſential to all pleaſure.

There is a fine obſervation of the elder PLINY, which illuſtrates the principle here inſiſted on. *It is very remarkable*, ſays he, *that the laſt works of celebrated artiſts, which they left imperfect, are always the moſt prized, ſuch as the* IRIS *of* ARISTIDES, *the* TYNDARIDES *of* NICOMACHUS, *the* MEDEA *of* TIMOMACHUS, *and the* VENUS *of* APELLES. *Theſe are valued even above their finiſhed productions: The broken lineaments of the piece, and the half-formed idea of the painter, are carefully ſtudied; and our very grief for that curious hand, which had been ſtopped by death, is an additional increaſe to our pleaſure**.

Theſe inſtances (and many more might be collected) are ſufficient to afford us ſome inſight into the analogy of nature, and to ſhow us, that the pleaſure which poets, orators, and muſicians give us by exciting grief, ſorrow, indignation, compaſſion, is not ſo extraordinary or paradoxical as it may at firſt ſight appear. The force of imagination, the energy of expreſſion, the power of numbers, the charms of imitation; all theſe are naturally, of themſelves, delightful to the mind: and when the object preſented lays alſo hold of ſome affection, the pleaſure ſtill riſes upon us, by the converſion of this ſubordinate movement into that which is predominant. The paſſion, though, perhaps naturally, and when excited by the ſimple appearance of a real object, it may be painful; yet is ſo ſmoothed, and ſoftened, and mollified, when raiſed by the finer arts, that it affords the higheſt entertainment.

To confirm this reaſoning, we may obſerve, that

* Illud vero perquam rarum ac memoria dignum, etiam ſuprema opera artificum, imperfectaſque tabulas, ſicut, IRIN ARISTIDIS, TYNDARIDAS NICOMACHI, MEDEAM TIMOMACHI, et quam diximus VENEREM APELLIS, in majori admiratione eſſe quam perfecta. Quippe in iis lineamenta reliqua, ipſæque cogitationes artificum ſpectantur, atque in lenocinio commendationis dolor eſt manus, cum id ageret, extinctæ. Lib. xxxv. cap. 11.

if the movements of the imagination be not predominant above thoſe of the paſſion, a contrary effect follows; and the former, being now ſubordinate, is converted into the latter, and ſtill farther encreaſes the pain and affliction of the ſufferer.

Who could ever think of it as a good expedient for comforting an afflicted parent, to exaggerate, with all the force of elocution, the irreparable loſs which he has met with by the death of a favourite child? The more power of imagination and expreſſion you here employ, the more you increaſe his deſpair and affliction.

The ſhame, confuſion, and terror of VERRES, no doubt, roſe in proportion to the noble eloquence and vehemence of CICERO: So alſo did his pain and uneaſineſs. Theſe former paſſions were too ſtrong for the pleaſure ariſing from the beauties of elocution; and operated, though from the ſame principle, yet in a contrary manner, to the ſympathy, compaſſion, and indignation of the audience.

Lord CLARENDON, when he approaches towards the cataſtrophe of the royal party, ſuppoſes, that his narration muſt then become infinitely diſagreeable; and he hurries over the king's death, without giving us one circumſtance of it. He conſiders it as too horrid a ſcene to be contemplated with any ſatisfaction, or even without the utmoſt pain and averſion. He himſelf, as well as the readers of that age, were too deeply concerned in the events, and felt a pain from ſubjects which an hiſtorian and a reader of another age would regard as the moſt pathetic and moſt intreſting, and, by conſequence, the moſt agreeable.

An action, repreſented in tragedy, may be too bloody and atrocious. It may excite ſuch movements of horror as will not ſoften into pleaſure; and the greateſt energy of expreſſion, beſtowed on deſcriptions of that nature, ſerves only to augment our uneaſineſs. Such is that action repreſented in the *Ambi-*

Ambitious Stepmother, where a venerable old man, raiſed to the height of fury and deſpair, ruſhes againſt a pillar, and ſtriking his head upon it, beſmears it all over with mingled brains and gore. The ENGLISH theatre abounds too much with ſuch ſhocking images.

Even the common ſentiments of compaſſion require to be ſoftened by ſome agreeable affection, in order to give a thorough ſatisfaction to the audience. The mere ſuffering of plaintive virtue, under the triumphant tyranny and oppreſſion of vice, forms a diſagreeable ſpectacle, and is carefully avoided by all maſters of the drama. In order to diſmiſs the audience with entire ſatisfaction and contentment, the virtue muſt either convert itſelf into a noble courageous deſpair, or the vice receive its proper puniſhment.

Moſt painters appear in this light to have been very unhappy in their ſubjects. As they wrought much for churches and convents, they have chiefly repreſented ſuch horrible ſubjects as crucifixions and martyrdoms, where nothing appears but tortures, wounds, executions, and paſſive ſuffering, without any action or affection. When they turned their pencil from this ghaſtly mythology, they had commonly recourſe to OVID, whoſe fictions, though paſſionate and agreeable, are ſcarcely natural or probable enough for painting.

The ſame inverſion of that principle, which is here inſiſted on, diſplays itſelf in common life, as in the effects of oratory and poetry. Raiſe ſo the ſubordinate paſſion that it becomes the predominant, it ſwallows up that affection which it before nouriſhed and encreaſed. Too much jealouſy extinguiſhes love: Too much difficulty renders us indifferent: Too much ſickneſs and infirmity diſguſts a ſelfiſh and unkind parent.

What ſo diſagreeable as the diſmal, gloomy, diſaſterous ſtories, with which melancholy people entertain their companions? The uneaſy paſſion being there raiſed alone, unaccompanied with any ſpirit, genius,

genius, or eloquence, conveys a pure uneaſineſs, and is attended with nothing that can ſoften it into pleaſure or ſatisfaction.

ESSAY XXIII.

Of the STANDARD of TASTE.

THE great variety of Taſte, as well as of opinion, which prevails in the world, is too obvious not to have fallen under every ones obſervation. Men of the moſt confined knowledge are able to remark a difference of taſte in the narrow circle of their acquaintance, even where the perſons have been educated under the ſame government, and have early imbibed the ſame prejudices: But thoſe who can enlarge their view to contemplate diſtant nations and remote ages, are ſtill more ſurpriſed at the great inconſiſtence and contrariety. We are apt to call *barbarous* whatever departs widely from our taſte and apprehenſion; but ſoon find the epithet of reproach retorted on us. And the higheſt arrogance and ſelf-conceit is at laſt ſtartled, on obſerving an equal aſſurance on all ſides, and ſcruples amidſt ſuch a conteſt of ſentiment, to pronounce poſitively in its own favour.

As this variety of taſte is obvious to the moſt careleſs enquirer; ſo it will be found, on examination, to be ſtill greater in reality than in appearance. The ſentiments of men often differ with regard to beauty and deformity of all kinds, even while their general diſcourſe is the ſame. There are certain terms in every language which import blame, and others praiſe; and all men who uſe the ſame tongue muſt agree in their

their application of them. Every voice is united in applauding elegance, propriety, ſimplicity, ſpirit in writing; and in blaming fuſtian, affectation, coldneſs, and a falſe brilliancy: But when critics come to particulars, this ſeeming unanimity vaniſhes; and it is found, that they had affixed a very different meaning to their expreſſions. In all matters of opinion and ſcience, the caſe is oppoſite: The difference among men is there oftener found to lie in generals than in particulars; and to be leſs in reality than in appearance. An explanation of the terms commonly ends the controverſy; and the diſputants are ſurpriſed to find, that they had been quarrelling, while at bottom they agreed in their judgment.

Thoſe who found morality on ſentiment more than on reaſon, are inclined to comprehend ethics under the former obſervation, and to maintain, that, in all queſtions which regard conduct and manners, the difference among men is really greater than at firſt ſight it appears. It is indeed obvious, that writers of all nations and all ages concur in applauding juſtice, humanity, magnanimity, prudence, veracity; and in blaming the oppoſite qualities. Even poets and other authors, whoſe compoſitions are chiefly calculated to pleaſe the imagination, are yet found, from HOMER down to FENELON, to inculcate the ſame moral precepts, and to beſtow their applauſe and blame on the ſame virtues and vices. This great unanimity is uſually aſcribed to the influence of plain reaſon; which, in all theſe caſes, maintains ſimilar ſentiments in all men, and prevents thoſe controverſies to which the abſtract ſciences are ſo much expoſed. So far as the unanimity is real, this account may be admitted as ſatisfactory; but we muſt alſo allow, that ſome part of the ſeeming harmony in morals may be accounted for from the very nature of language. The word *virtue*, with its equivalent in every tongue, implies praiſe; as that of *vice*, does blame: And no one, without the moſt obvious and groſſeſt impropriety, could affix

affix a reproach to a term, which in general acceptation is underſtood in a good ſenſe; or beſtow applauſe, where the idiom requires diſapprobation. HOMER's general precepts, where he delivers any ſuch, will never be controverted; but it is obvious, that, when he draws particular pictures of manners, and repreſents heroiſm in ACHILLES and prudence in ULYSSES, he intermixes a much greater degree of ferocity in the former, and of cunning and fraud in the latter, than FENELON would admit of. The ſage ULYSSES in the GREEK poet ſeems to delight in lies and fictions, and often employs them without any neceſſity or even advantage; but his more ſcrupulous ſon, in the FRENCH epic writer, expoſes himſelf to the moſt imminent perils, rather than depart from the moſt exact line of truth and veracity.

The admirers and followers of the ALCORAN inſiſt on the excellent moral precepts interſperſed throughout that wild and abſurd performance. But it is to be ſuppoſed, that the ARABIC words, which correſpond to the ENGLISH, equity, juſtice, temperance, meekneſs, charity, were ſuch as, from the conſtant uſe of that tongue, muſt always be taken in a good ſenſe; and it would have argued the greateſt ignorance, not of morals, but of language, to have mentioned them with any epithets, beſides thoſe of applauſe and approbation. But would we know, whether the pretended prophet had really attained a juſt ſentiment of morals? Let us attend to his narration; and we ſhall ſoon find, that he beſtows praiſe on ſuch inſtances of treachery, inhumanity, cruelty, revenge, bigotry, as are utterly incompatible with civilized ſociety. No ſteady rule of right ſeems there to be attended to; and every action is blamed or praiſed, ſo far only as it is beneficial or hurtful to the true believers.

The merit of delivering true general precepts in ethics is indeed very ſmall. Whoever recommends any moral virtues, really does no more than is implied in the terms themſelves. That people who invented

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the word *charity*, and used it in a good sense, inculcated more clearly and much more efficaciously, the precept, *be charitable*, than any pretended legislator or prophet, who should insert such a *maxim* in his writings. Of all expressions, those which, together with their other meaning, imply a degree either of blame or approbation, are the least liable to be perverted or mistaken.

It is natural for us to seek a *Standard of Taste;* a rule by which the various sentiments of men may be reconciled; at least, a decision afforded, confirming one sentiment, and condemning another.

There is a species of philosophy, which cuts off all hopes of success in such an attempt, and represents the impossibility of ever attaining any standard of taste. The difference, it is said, is very wide between judgement and sentiment. All sentiment is right; because sentiment has a reference to nothing beyond itself, and is always real, wherever a man is conscious of it. But all determinations of the understanding are not right; because they have a reference to something beyond themselves, to wit, real matter of fact; and are not always conformable to that standard. Among a thousand different opinions which different men may entertain of the same subject, there is one, and but one, that is just and true; and the only difficulty is to fix and ascertain it. On the contrary, a thousand different sentiments, excited by the same object, are all right; because no sentiment represents what is really in the object. It only marks a certain conformity or relation between the object and the organs or faculties of the mind; and if that conformity did not really exist, the sentiment could never possibly have being. Beauty is no quality in things themselves: It exists merely in the mind which contemplates them; and each mind perceives a different beauty. One person may even perceive deformity, where another is sensible of beauty; and every individual ought to acquiesce in his own sentiment, without pretending to

to regulate thoſe of others. To ſeek the real beauty, or real deformity, is as fruitleſs an enquiry as to pretend to aſcertain the real ſweet or real bitter. According to the diſpoſition of the organs, the ſame object may be both ſweet and bitter; and the proverb has juſtly determined it to be fruitleſs to diſpute concerning taſtes. It is very natural, and even quite neceſſary, to extend this axiom to mental, as well as bodily taſte; and thus common ſenſe, which is ſo often at variance with philoſophy, eſpecially with the ſceptical kind, is found, in one inſtance at leaſt, to agree in pronouncing the ſame deciſion.

But though this axiom, by paſſing into a proverb, ſeems to have attained the ſanction of common ſenſe; there is certainly a ſpecies of common ſenſe which oppoſes it, at leaſt ſerves to modify and reſtrain it. Whoever would aſſert an equality of genius and elegance between OGILBY and MILTON, or BUNYAN and ADDISON, would be thought to defend no leſs an extravagance, than if he had maintained a mole-hill to be as high as TENERIFFE, or a pond as extenſive as the ocean. Though there may be found perſons who give the preference to the former authors, no one pays attention to ſuch a taſte; and we pronounce without ſcruple, the ſentiment of theſe pretended critics to be abſurd and ridiculous. The principle of the natural equality of taſtes is then totally forgot, and while we admit it on ſome occaſions, where the objects ſeem near an equality, it appears an extravagant paradox, or rather a palpable abſurdity, where objects ſo diſproportioned are compared together.

It is evident that none of the rules of compoſition are fixed by reaſonings *a priori*, or can be eſteemed abſtract concluſions of the underſtanding, from comparing thoſe habitudes and relations of ideas, which are eternal and immutable. Their foundation is the ſame with that of all the practical ſciences, experience; nor are they any thing but general obſervations, concerning what has been univerſally found to pleaſe

in all countries and in all ages. Many of the beauties of poetry, and even of eloquence, are founded on falſehood and fiction, on hyperboles, metaphors, and an abuſe or perverſion of terms from their natural meaning, To check the ſallies of the imagination, and to reduce every expreſſion to geometrical truth and exactneſs, would be the moſt contrary to the laws of criticiſm; becauſe it would produce a work, which, by univerſal experience, has been found the moſt inſipid and diſagreeable: But though poetry can never ſubmit to exact truth, it muſt be confined by rules of art, diſcovered to the author either by genius or obſervation. If ſome negligent or irregular writers have pleaſed, they have not pleaſed by their tranſgreſſions of rule or order; but in ſpite of theſe tranſgreſſions, they have poſſeſſed other beauties, which were conformable to juſt criticiſm; and the force of theſe beauties has been able to overpower cenſure, and give the mind a ſatisfaction ſuperior to the diſguſt ariſing from the blemiſhes. Ariosto pleaſes; but not by his monſtrous and improbable fictions, by his bizarre mixture of the ſerious and comic ſtyles, by the want of coherence in his ſtories, or by the continual interruptions of his narration. He charms by the force and clearneſs of his expreſſion, by the readineſs and variety of his inventions, and by his natural pictures of the paſſions, eſpecially thoſe of the gay and amorous kind: And however his faults may diminiſh our ſatisfaction, they are not able entirely to deſtroy it. Did our pleaſure really ariſe from thoſe parts of his poem which we denominate faults, this would be no objection to criticiſm in general: It would only be an objection to thoſe particular rules of criticiſm, which would eſtabliſh ſuch circumſtances to be faults, and would repreſent them as univerſally blameable. If they are found to pleaſe, they cannot be faults, let the pleaſure which they produce be ever ſo unexpected and unaccountable.

But though all the general rules of art are founded only

only on experience, and on the obſervation of the common ſentiments of human nature, we muſt not imagine that, on every occaſion, the feelings of men will be conformable to theſe rules. Thoſe finer emotions of the mind are of a very tender and delicate nature, and require the concurrence of many favourable circumſtances to make them play with facility and exactneſs, according to their general and eſtabliſhed principles. The leaſt exterior hinderance to ſuch ſmall ſprings, or the leaſt internal diſorder, diſturbs their motion, and confounds the operation of the whole machine. When we would make an experiment of this nature, and would try the force of any beauty or deformity, we muſt chooſe with care a proper time and place, and bring the fancy to a ſuitable ſituation and diſpoſition. A perfect ſerenity of mind, a recollection of thought, a due attention to the object; if any of theſe circumſtances be wanting, our experiment will be fallacious, and we ſhall be unable to judge of the catholic and univerſal beauty. The relation which nature has placed between the form and the ſentiment, will at leaſt be more obſcure; and it will require greater accuracy to trace and diſcern it. We ſhall be able to aſcertain its influence, not ſo much from the operation of each particular beauty, as from the durable admiration, which attends thoſe works, that have ſurvived all the caprices of mode and faſhion, all the miſtakes of ignorance and envy.

The fame HOMER who pleaſed at ATHENS and ROME two thouſand years ago, is ſtill admired at PARIS and at LONDON. All the changes of climate, government, religion, and language, have not been able to obſcure his glory. Authority or prejudice may give a temporary vogue to a bad poet or orator; but his reputation will never be durable or general. When his compoſitions are examined by poſterity or by foreigners, the enchantment is diſſipated, and his faults appear in their true colours. On the contrary, a real genius, the longer his works endure, and the

more wide they are ſpread, the more ſincere is the admiration which he meets with. Envy and jealouſy have too much place in a narrow circle; and even familiar acquaintance with his perſon may diminiſh the applauſe due to his performances: but when theſe obſtructions are removed, the beauties which are naturally fitted to excite agreeable ſentiments, immediately diſplay their energy; and while the world endures, they maintain their authority over the minds of men.

It appears then, that, amidſt all the variety and caprice of taſte, there are certain general principles of approbation or blame, whoſe influence a careful eye may trace in all operations of the mind. Some particular forms or qualities, from the original ſtructure of the internal fabric, are calculated to pleaſe, and others to diſpleaſe; and if they fail of their effect in any particular inſtance, it is from ſome apparent defect or imperfection in the organ. A man in a fever would not inſiſt on his palate as able to decide concerning flavours; nor would one affected with the jaundice pretend to give a verdict with regard to colours. In each creature, there is a ſound and a defective ſtate; and the former alone can be ſuppoſed to afford us a true ſtandard of taſte and ſentiment. If, in the ſound ſtate of the organ, there be an entire or a conſiderable uniformity of ſentiment among men, we may thence derive an idea of the perfect beauty; in like manner as the appearance of objects in day-light, to the eye of a man in health, is denominated their true and real colour, even while colour is allowed to be merely a phantaſm of the ſenſes.

Many and frequent are the defects in the internal organs, which prevent or weaken the influence of thoſe general principles, on which depends our ſentiment of beauty or deformity. Though ſome objects, by the ſtructure of the mind, be naturally calculated to give pleaſure, it is not to be expected,

that in every individual the pleaſure will be equally felt. Particular incidents and ſituations occur, which either throw a falſe light on the objects, or hinder the true from conveying to the imagination the proper ſentiment and perception.

One obvious cauſe, why many feel not the proper ſentiment of beauty, is the want of that *delicacy* of imagination, which is requiſite to convey a ſenſibility of thoſe finer emotions. This delicacy every one pretends to: Every one talks of it, and would reduce every kind of taſte or ſentiment to its ſtandard. But as our intention in this eſſay is to mingle ſome light of the underſtanding with the feelings of ſentiment, it will be proper to give a more accurate definition of delicacy than has hitherto been attempted. And not to draw our philoſophy from too profound a ſource, we ſhall have recourſe to a noted ſtory in DON QUIXOTE.

It is with good reaſon, ſays SANCHO to the ſquare with the great noſe, that I pretend to have a judgement in wine: This is a quality hereditary in our family. Two of my kinſmen were once called to give their opinion of a hogſhead, which was ſuppoſed to be excellent, being old and of a good vintage. One of them taſtes it; conſiders it; and after mature reflection pronounces the wine to be good, were it not for a ſmall taſte of leather which he perceived in it. The other, after uſing the ſame precautions, gives alſo his verdict in favour of the wine; but with the reſerve of a taſte of iron, which he could eaſily diſtinguiſh. You cannot imagine how much they were both ridiculed for their judgment. But who laughed in the end? On emptying the hogſhead, there was found at the bottom an old key with a leathern thong tied to it.

The great reſemblance between mental and bodily taſte will eaſily teach us to apply this ſtory. Though it be certain, that beauty and deformity, more than ſweet and bitter, are not qualities in objects, but belong

long entirely to the ſentiment, internal or external; it muſt be allowed, that there are certain qualities in objects which are fitted by nature to produce thoſe particular feelings. Now as theſe qualities may be found in a ſmall degree, or may be mixed and confounded with each other, it often happens, that the taſte is not affected with ſuch minute qualities, or is not able to diſtinguiſh all the particular flavours, amidſt the diſorder in which they are preſented. Where the organs are ſo fine as to allow nothing to eſcape them, and at the ſame time ſo exact as to perceive every ingredient in the compoſition; this we call delicacy of taſte, whether we employ theſe terms in the literal or metaphorical ſenſe. Here then the general rules of beauty are of uſe; being drawn from eſtabliſhed models, and from the obſervation of what pleaſes or diſpleaſes, when preſented ſingly and in a high degree: And if the ſame qualities, in a continued compoſition and in a ſmaller degree, affect not the organs with a ſenſible delight or uneaſineſs, we exclude the perſon from all pretenſions to this delicacy. To produce theſe general rules or avowed patterns of compoſition, is like finding the key with the leathern thong; which juſtified the verdict of SANCHO's kinſmen, and confounded thoſe pretended judges who had condemned them. Though the hogſhead had never been emptied, the taſte of the one was ſtill equally delicate, and that of the other equally dull and languid: But it would have been more difficult to have proved the ſuperiority of the former, to the conviction of every by-ſtander. In like manner, though the beauties of writing had never been methodized, or reduced to general principles; though no excellent models had ever been acknowledged; the different degrees of taſte would ſtill have ſubſiſted, and the judgment of one man been preferable to that of another: but it would not have been ſo eaſy to ſilence the bad critic, who might always inſiſt upon his particular ſentiment, and re-

fuse to submit to his antagonist. But when we show him an avowed principle of art; when we illustrate this principle by examples, whose operation, from his own particular taste, he acknowledges to be conformable to the principle; when we prove, that the same principle may be applied to the present case, where he did not perceive or feel its influence: he must conclude, upon the whole, that the fault lies in himself, and that he wants the delicacy which is requisite to make him sensible of every beauty and every blemish, in any composition or discourse.

It is acknowledged to be the perfection of every sense or faculty, to perceive with exactness its most minute objects, and allow nothing to escape its notice and observation. The smaller the objects are, which become sensible to the eye, the finer is that organ, and the more elaborate its make and composition. A good palate is not tried by strong flavours; but by a mixture of small ingredients, where we are still sensible of each part, notwithstanding its minuteness and its confusion with the rest. In like manner a quick and acute perception of beauty and deformity must be the perfection of our mental taste; nor can a man be satisfied with himself while he suspects, that any excellence or blemish in a discourse has passed him unobserved. In this case, the perfection of the man, and the perfection of the sense or feeling, are found to be united. A very delicate palate, on many occasions, may be a great inconvenience both to a man, himself, and to his friends: But a delicate taste of wit or beauty must always be a desirable quality; because it is the source of all the finest and most innocent enjoyments of which human nature is susceptible. In this decision the sentiments of all mankind are agreed. Wherever you can ascertain a delicacy of taste, it is sure to meet with approbation; and the best way of ascertaining it is to appeal to those models and principles which have been esta-

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bliſhed by the uniform conſent and experience of nations and ages.

But though there be naturally a wide difference in point of delicacy between one perſon and another, nothing tends further to encreaſe and improve this talent, than *practice* in a particular art, and the frequent ſurvey or contemplation of a particular ſpecies of beauty. When objects of any kind are firſt preſented to the eye or imagination, the ſentiment which attends them is obſcure and confuſed; and the mind is, in a great meaſure, incapable of pronouncing concerning their merits or defects. The taſte cannot perceive the ſeveral excellencies of the performance; much leſs diſtinguiſh the particular character of each excellency, and aſcertain its quality and degree. If it pronounce the whole in general to be beautiful or deformed, it is the utmoſt that can be expected; and even this judgment, a perſon, ſo unpractiſed, will be apt to deliver with great heſitation and reſerve. But allow him to acquire experience in thoſe objects, his feeling becomes more exact and nice: He not only perceives the beauties and defects of each part, but marks the diſtinguiſhing ſpecies of each quality, and aſſigns its ſuitable praiſe or blame. A clear and diſtinct ſentiment attends him through the whole ſurvey of the objects; and he diſcerns that very degree and kind of approbation or diſpleaſure, which each part is naturally fitted to produce. The miſt diſſipates, which ſeemed formerly to hang over the object: The organ acquires greater perfection in its operations; and can pronounce, without danger of miſtake, concerning the merits of every performance. In a word, the ſame addreſs and dexterity, which practice gives to the execution of any work, is alſo acquired by the ſame means in the judging of it.

So advantageous is practice to the diſcernment of beauty, that, before we can give judgment on any work of importance, it will even be requiſite, that

that very individual performance be more than once perused by us, and be surveyed in different lights with attention and deliberation. There is a flutter or hurry of thought which attends the first perusal of any piece, and which confounds the genuine sentiment of beauty. The relation of the parts is not discerned: The true characters of style are little distinguished: The several perfections and defects seem wrapped up in a species of confusion, and present themselves indistinctly to the imagination. Not to mention, that there is a species of beauty, which as it is florid and superficial, pleases at first; but being found incompatible with a just expression either of reason or passion, soon palls upon the taste, and is then rejected with disdain, at least rated at a much lower value.

It is impossible to continue in the practice of contemplating any order of beauty, without being frequently obliged to form *comparisons* between the several species and degrees of excellence, and estimating their proportion to each other. A man who has had no opportunity of comparing the different kinds of beauty, is indeed totally unqualified to pronounce an opinion with regard to any object presented to him. By comparison alone we fix the epithets of praise or blame, and learn how to assign the due degree of each. The coarsest daubing contains a certain lustre of colours and exactness of imitation, which are so far beauties, and would affect the mind of a peasant or Indian with the highest admiration. The most vulgar ballads are not entirely destitute of harmony or nature; and none but a person, familiarized to superior beauties, would pronounce their numbers harsh, or narration uninteresting. A great inferiority of beauty gives pain to a person conversant in the highest excellence of the kind, and is for that reason pronounced a deformity: As the most finished object, with which we are acquainted, is naturally supposed to have reached the pinnacle of perfection,

perfection, and to be intitled to the higheſt aplauſe. One accuſtomed to ſee, and examine, and weigh the ſeveral performances, admired in different ages and nations, can alone rate the merits of a work exhibited to his view, and aſſign its proper rank among the productions of genius.

But to enable a critic the more fully to execute this undertaking, he muſt preſerve his mind free from all *prejudice*, and allow nothing to enter into his conſideration, but the very object which is ſubmitted to his examination. We may obſerve, that every work of art, in order to produce its due effect on the mind, muſt be ſurveyed in a certain point of view, and cannot be fully reliſhed by perſons, whoſe ſituation, real or imaginary, is not conformable to that which is required by the performance. An orator addreſſes himſelf to a particular audience, and muſt have a regard to their particular genius, intereſts, opinions, paſſions, and prejudices; otherwiſe he hopes in vain to govern their reſolutions, and inflame their affections. Should they even have entertained ſome prepoſſeſſions againſt him, however unreaſonable, he muſt not overlook this diſadvantage; but, before he enters upon the ſubject, muſt endeavour to conciliate their affection, and acquire their good graces. A critic of a different age or nation, who ſhould peruſe this diſcourſe, muſt have all theſe circumſtances in his eye, and muſt place himſelf in the ſame ſituation as the audience, in order to form a true judgement of the oration. In like manner, when any work is addreſſed to the public, though I ſhould have a friendſhip or enmity with the author, I muſt depart from this ſituation; and conſidering myſelf as a man in general, forget, if poſſible, my individual being and my peculiar circumſtances. A perſon influenced by prejudice, complies not with this condition; but obſtinately maintains his natural poſition, without placing himſelf in that point of view which the performance ſuppoſes. If the work be addreſſed

to perſons of a different age or nation, he makes no allowance for their peculiar views and prejudices; but, full of the manners of his own age and country, raſhly condemns what ſeemed admirable in the eyes of thoſe for whom alone the diſcourſe was calculated. If the work be executed for the public, he never ſufficiently enlarges his comprehenſion, or forgets his intereſt as a friend or enemy, as a rival or commentator. By this means his ſentiments are perverted; nor have the ſame beauties and blemiſhes the ſame influence upon him, as if he had impoſed a proper violence on his imagination, and had forgotten himſelf for a moment. So far his taſte evidently departs from the true ſtandard; and of conſequence loſes all credit and authority.

It is well known, that in all queſtions ſubmitted to the underſtanding, prejudice is deſtructive of ſound judgment, and perverts all operations of the intellectual faculties: it is no leſs contrary to good taſte; nor has it leſs influence to corrupt our ſentiment of beauty. It belongs to *good ſenſe* to check its influence in both caſes; and in this reſpect, as well as in many others, reaſon, if not an eſſential part of taſte, is at leaſt requiſite to the operations of this latter faculty. In all the nobler productions of genius, there is a mutual relation and correſpondence of parts; nor can either the beauties or blemiſhes be perceived by him, whoſe thought is not capacious enough to comprehend all thoſe parts, and compare them with each other, in order to perceive the conſiſtence and uniformity of the whole. Every work of art has alſo a certain end or purpoſe for which it is calculated; and is to be deemed more or leſs perfect, as it is more or leſs fitted to attain this end. The object of eloquence is to perſuade, of hiſtory to inſtruct, of poetry to pleaſe, by means of the paſſions and the imagination. Theſe ends we muſt carry conſtantly in our view, when we peruſe any performance; and we muſt be able to judge how far the means

means employed are adapted to their reſpective purpoſes. Beſides every kind of compoſition, even the moſt poetical, is nothing but a chain of propoſitions and reaſonings; not always, indeed, the juſteſt and moſt exact, but ſtill plauſible and ſpecious, however diſguiſed by the colouring of the imagination. The perſons introduced in tragedy and epic poetry, muſt be repreſented as reaſoning, and thinking, and concluding, and acting, ſuitably to their character and circumſtances; and without judgment, as well as taſte and invention, a poet can never hope to ſucceed in ſo delicate an undertaking. Not to mention, that the ſame excellence of faculties which contributes to the improvement of reaſon, the ſame clearneſs of conception, the ſame exactneſs of diſtinction, the ſame vivacity of apprehenſion, are eſſential to the operations of true taſte, and are its infallible concomitants. It ſeldom or never happens, that a man of ſenſe, who has any experience in art, cannot judge of its beauty; and it is no leſs rare to meet with a man who has a juſt taſte without a ſound underſtanding.

Thus, though the principles of taſte be univerſal, and nearly, if not entirely, the ſame in all men; yet few are qualified to give judgment on any work of art, or eſtabliſh their own ſentiment as the ſtandard of beauty. The organs of internal ſenſation are ſeldom ſo perfect as to allow the general principles their full play, and produce a feeling correſpondent to thoſe principles. They either labour under ſome defect, or are vitiated by ſome diſorder; and by that means, excite a ſentiment which may be pronounced erroneous. When the critic has no delicacy, he judges without any diſtinction, and is only affected by the groſſer and more palpable qualities of the object: The finer touches paſs unnoticed and diſregarded. Where he is not aided by practice, his verdict is attended with confuſion and heſitation. Where no compariſon has been employed, the moſt frivolous beauties, ſuch as

as rather merit the name of defects, are the object of his admiration. Where he lies under the influence of prejudice, all his natural sentiments are perverted. Where good sense is wanting, he is not qualified to discern the beauties of design and reasoning, which are the highest and most excellent. Under some or other of these imperfections, the generality of men labour; and hence a true judge in the finer arts is observed, even during the most polished ages, to be so rare a character: Strong sense, united to delicate sentiment, improved by practice, perfected by comparison, and cleared of all prejudice, can alone intitle critics to this valuable character; and the joint verdict of such, wherever they are to be found, is the true standard of taste and beauty.

But where are such critics to be found? By what marks are they to be known? How distinguish them from pretenders? These questions are embarrassing; and seem to throw us back into the same uncertainty, from which, during the course of this essay, we have endeavoured to extricate ourselves.

But if we consider the matter aright, these are questions of fact, not of sentiment. Whether any particular person be endowed with good sense and a delicate imagination, free from prejudice, may often be the subject of dispute, and be liable to great discussion and enquiry; but that such a character is valuable and estimable will be agreed in by all mankind. Where these doubts occur, men can do no more than in other disputable questions, which are submitted to the understanding: They must produce the best arguments that their invention suggests to them; they must acknowledge a true and decisive standard to exist somewhere, to wit, real existence and matter of fact; and they must have indulgence to such as differ from them in their appeals to this standard. It is sufficient for our present purpose, if we have proved, that the taste of all individuals is not upon an equal footing, and that some men in general, however difficult

ficult to be particularly pitched upon, will be acknowledged by univerſal ſentiment to have a preference above others.

But in reality the difficulty of finding, even in particulars, the ſtandard of taſte, is not ſo great as it is repreſented. Though in ſpeculation we may readily avow a certain criterion in ſcience, and deny it in ſentiment, the matter is found in practice to be much more hard to aſcertain in the former caſe than in the latter. Theories of abſtract philoſophy, ſyſtems of profound theology, have prevailed during one age: In a ſucceſſive period theſe have been univerſally exploded; their abſurdity has been detected; other theories and ſyſtems have ſupplied their place, which again gave place to their ſucceſſors; and nothing has been experienced more liable to the revolutions of chance and faſhion than theſe pretended deciſions of ſcience. The caſe is not the ſame with the beauties of eloquence and poetry. Juſt expreſſions of paſſion and nature are ſure, after a little time, to gain public applauſe, which they maintain for ever. ARISTOTLE, and PLATO, and EPICURUS, and DESCARTES, may ſucceſſively yield to each other: But TERENCE and VIRGIL maintain an univerſal, undiſputed empire over the minds of men. The abſtract philoſophy of CICERO has loſt its credit: The vehemence of his oratory is ſtill the object of our admiration.

Though men of delicate taſte be rare, they are eaſily to be diſtinguiſhed in ſociety by the ſoundneſs of their underſtanding, and the ſuperiority of their faculties above the reſt of mankind. The aſcendant which they acquire, gives a prevalence to that lively approbation, with which they receive any productions of genius, and renders it generally predominant. Many men, when left to themſelves, have but a faint and dubious perception of beauty, who yet are capable of reliſhing any fine ſtroke which is pointed out to them. Every convert to the admiration of the real poet or orator is the cauſe of ſome new converſion.

And though prejudices may prevail for a time, they never unite in celebrating any rival to the true genius, but yield at laſt to the force of nature and juſt ſentiment. Thus, though a civilized nation may eaſily be miſtaken in the choice of their admired philoſopher, they never have been found long to err in their affection for a favourite epic or tragic author.

But notwithſtanding all our endeavours to fix a ſtandard of taſte, and reconcile the diſcordant apprehenſions of men, there ſtill remain two ſources of variaton, which are not ſufficient indeed to confound all the boundaries of beauty and deformity, but will often ſerve to produce a difference in the degrees of our approbation or blame. The one is the different humours of particular men; the other, the particular manners and opinions of our age and country. The general principles of taſte are uniform in human nature: Where men vary in their judgments, ſome defect or perverſion in the faculties may commonly be remarked, proceeding either from prejudice, from want of practice, or want of delicacy; and there is juſt reaſon for approving one taſte and condemning another: But where there is ſuch a diverſity in the internal frame or external ſituation as is entirely blameleſs on both ſides, and leaves no room to give one the preference above the other; in that caſe, a certain degree of diverſity in judgment is unavoidable, and we ſeek in vain for a ſtandard, by which we can reconcile the contrary ſentiments.

A young man, whoſe paſſions are warm, will be more ſenſibly touched with amorous and tender images than a man more advanced in years, who takes pleaſure in wiſe, philoſophical reflections concerning the conduct of life and moderation of the paſſions. At twenty, OVID may be the favourite author; HORACE at forty: and perhaps TACITUS at fifty. Vainly would we, in ſuch caſes, endeavour to enter into the ſentiments of others, and diveſt ourſelves of thoſe propenſities which are natural to us. We chooſe our favourite

favourite author as we do our friend, from a conformity of humour and diſpoſition. Mirth or paſſion, ſentiment or reflection; whichever of theſe moſt predominates in our temper, it gives us a peculiar ſympathy with the writer who reſembles us.

One perſon is more pleaſed with the ſublime; another, with the tender; a third, with raillery. One has a ſtrong ſenſibility to blemiſhes, and is extremely ſtudious of correctneſs: Another has a more lively feeling of beauties, and pardons twenty abſurdities and defects for one elevated or pathetic ſtroke. The ear of this man is entirely turned towards conciſeneſs and energy; that man is delighted with a copious, rich, and harmonious expreſſion. Simplicity is affected by one; ornament, by another. Comedy, tragedy, ſatire, odes, have each its partizans, who prefer that particular ſpecies of writing to all others. It is plainly an error in a critic to confine his approbation to one ſpecies or ſtyle of writing, and condemn all the reſt. But it is almoſt impoſſible not to feel a predilection for that which ſuits our particular turn and diſpoſition. Such preferences are innocent and unavoidable, and can never reaſonably be the object of diſpute, becauſe there is no ſtandard by which they can be decided.

For a like reaſon, we are more pleaſed in the courſe of our reading, with pictures and characters that reſemble objects which are found in our own age or country, than with thoſe which deſcribe a different ſet of cuſtoms. It is not without ſome effort, that we reconcile ourſelves to the ſimplicity of ancient manners, and behold princeſſes carrying water from the ſpring, and kings and heroes dreſſing their own victuals. We may allow in general, that the repreſentation of ſuch manners is no fault in the author, nor deformity in the piece; but we are not ſo ſenſibly touched with them. For this reaſon, comedy is not eaſily transferred from one age or nation to another. A FRENCHMAN or ENGLISHMAN is not pleaſed with the

ANDRIA of TERENCE, or CLITIA of MACHIAVEL; where the fine lady, upon whom all the play turns, never once appears to the ſpectators, but is always kept behind the ſcenes, ſuitably to the reſerved humour of the ancient GREEKS and ITALIANS. A man of learning and reflection can make allowance for theſe peculiarities of manners; but a common audience can never diveſt themſelves ſo far of their uſual ideas and ſentiments, as to reliſh pictures which nowiſe reſemble them.

But here there occurs a reflection, which may, perhaps, be uſeful in examining the celebrated controverſy concerning ancient and modern learning; where we often find the one ſide excuſing any ſeeming abſurdity in the ancients from the manners of the age, and the other refuſing to admit this excuſe, or at leaſt admitting it only as an apology for the author, not for the performance. In my opinion, the proper boundaries in this ſubject have ſeldom been fixed between the contending parties. Where any innocent peculiarities of manners are repreſented, ſuch as thoſe above mentioned, they ought certainly to be admitted; and a man who is ſhocked with them, gives an evident proof of falſe delicacy and refinement. The poet's *monument more durable than braſs*, muſt fall to the ground like common brick or clay, were men to make no allowance for the continual revolutions of manners and cuſtoms, and would admit of nothing but what was ſuitable to the prevailing faſhion. Muſt we throw aſide the pictures of our anceſtors, becauſe of their ruffs and fardingales? But where the ideas of morality and decency alter from one age to another, and where vicious manners are deſcribed, without being marked with the proper characters of blame and diſapprobation; this muſt be allowed to diſfigure the poem, and to be a real deformity. I cannot, nor is it proper I ſhould, enter into ſuch ſentiments; and however I may excuſe the poet, on account of the manners of his age, I never can reliſh the compoſi-

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tion. The want of humanity and of decency, ſo conſpicuous in the characters drawn by ſeveral of the ancient poets, even ſometimes by HOMER and the GREEK tragedians, diminiſhes conſiderably the merit of their noble performances, and gives modern authors an advantage over them. We are not intereſted in the fortunes and ſentiments of ſuch rough heroes: We are diſpleaſed to find the limits of vice and virtue ſo much confounded: And whatever indulgence we may give to the writer on account of his prejudices, we cannot prevail on ourſelves to enter into his ſentiments, to bear an affection to characters which we plainly diſcover to be blameable.

The caſe is not the ſame with moral principles, as with ſpeculative opinions of any kind. Theſe are in continual flux and revolution. The ſon embraces a different ſyſtem from the father: Nay, there ſcarcely is any man who can boaſt of great conſtancy and uniformity in this particular. Whatever ſpeculative errors may be found in the polite writings of any age or country, they detract but little from the value of thoſe compoſitions. There needs but a certain turn of thought or imagination to make us enter into all the opinions which then prevailed, and reliſh the ſentiments or concluſions derived from them: but a very violent effort is requiſite to change our judgment of manners, and excite ſentiments of approbation or blame, love or hatred, different from thoſe to which the mind from long cuſtom has been familiarized: And where a man is confident of the rectitude of that moral ſtandard, by which he judges, he is juſtly jealous of it, and will not pervert the ſentiments of his heart for a moment, in complaiſance to any writer whatſoever.

Of all ſpeculative errors, thoſe which regard religion are the moſt excuſable in compoſitions of genius; nor is it ever permitted to judge of the civility or wiſdom of any people, or even of ſingle perſons, by the groſſneſs or refinement of their theological prin-

principles. The ſame good ſenſe that directs men in the ordinary occurrences of life, is not hearkened to in religious matters, which are ſuppoſed to be placed altogether above the cognizance of human reaſon. On this account, all the abſurdities of the pagan ſyſtem of theology muſt be overlooked by every critic, who would pretend to form a juſt notion of ancient poetry; and our poſterity, in their turn, muſt have the ſame indulgence to their forefathers. No religious principles can ever be imputed as a fault to any poet, while they remain merely principles, and take not ſuch ſtrong poſſeſſion of his heart, as to lay him under the imputation of *bigotry* or *ſuperſtition*. Where that happens, they confound the ſentiments of morality, and alter the natural boundaries of vice and virtue. They are therefore eternal blemiſhes, according to the principle above mentioned; nor are the prejudices and falſe opinions of the age ſufficient to juſtify them.

It is eſſential to the ROMAN catholic religion to inſpire a violent hatred of every other worſhip, and to repreſent all pagans, mahometans, and heretics, as the objects of divine wrath and vengeance. Such ſentiments, though they are in reality very blameable, are conſidered as virtues by the zealots of that communion, and are repreſented in their tragedies and epic poems as a kind of divine heroiſm. This bigotry has diſfigured two very fine tragedies of the FRENCH theatre, POLIEUCTE and ATHALIA; where an intemperate zeal for particular modes of worſhip is ſet off with all the pomp imaginable, and forms the predominant character of the heroes. "What is this," ſays the ſublime JOAD to JOSABET, finding her in diſcourſe with MATHAN the prieſt of BAAL, "Does the daughter of "DAVID ſpeak to this traitor? Are you not afraid, "leſt the earth ſhould open and pour forth flames to "devour you both? Or, leſt thoſe holy walls ſhould "fall and cruſh you together? What is his purpoſe? "Why comes that enemy of GOD hither to poiſon the "air

"air which we breathe with his horrid preſence?" Such ſentiments are received with great applauſe on the theatre of PARIS; but at LONDON the ſpectators would be full as much pleaſed to hear ACHILLES tell AGAMEMNON, that he was a dog in his forehead, and a deer in his heart; or JUPITER threaten JUNO with a ſound drubbing if ſhe will not be quiet.

Religious principles are alſo a blemiſh in any polite compoſition, when they riſe up to ſuperſtition, and intrude themſelves into every ſentiment, however remote from any connection with religion. It is no excuſe for the poet, that the cuſtoms of his country had burdened life with ſo many religious ceremonies and obſervances, that no part of it was exempt from that yoke. It muſt for ever be ridiculous in PETRARCH to compare his miſtreſs, LAURA, to JESUS CHRIST. Nor is it leſs ridiculous in that agreeable libertine, BOCCACE, very ſeriouſly to give thanks to GOD ALMIGHTY and the ladies, for their aſſiſtance in defending him againſt his enemies.

ESSAYS,

MORAL, POLITICAL, AND LITERARY,

PART II*.

ESSAY I.

Of COMMERCE.

THE greater part of mankind may be divided into two claſſes; that of *ſhallow* thinkers, who fall ſhort of the truth; and that of *abſtruſe* thinkers, who go beyond it. The latter claſs are by far the moſt rare: and I may add, by far the moſt uſeful and valuable. They ſuggeſt hints, at leaſt, and ſtart difficulties, which they want, perhaps, ſkill to purſue; but which may produce fine diſcoveries, when handled by men who have a more juſt way of thinking. At worſt, what they ſay is uncommon; and if it ſhould coſt ſome pains to comprehend it, one has, however, the pleaſure of hearing ſomething that is new. An author is little to be valued, who tells us nothing but what we can learn from every coffee-houſe converſation.

All people of *ſhallow* thought are apt to decry even thoſe of *ſolid* underſtanding, as *abſtruſe* thinkers and metaphyſicians, and refiners; and never will allow any thing to be juſt which is beyond their own

* Publiſhed in 1752.

own weak conceptions. There are ſome caſes, I own, where an extraordinary refinement affords a ſtrong preſumption of falſehood, and where no reaſoning is to be truſted but what is natural and eaſy. When a man deliberates concerning his conduct in any *particular* affair, and forms ſchemes in politics, trade, economy, or any buſineſs in life; he never ought to draw his arguments too fine, or connect too long a chain of conſequences together. Something is ſure to happen that will diſconcert his reaſoning, and produce an event different from what he expected. But when we reaſon upon *general* ſubjects, one may juſtly affirm, that our ſpeculations can ſcarcely ever be too fine, provided they be juſt; and that the difference between a common man and a man of genius, is chiefly ſeen in the ſhallowneſs or depth of the principles upon which they proceed. General reaſonings ſeem intricate, merely becauſe they are general; nor is it eaſy for the bulk of mankind to diſtinguiſh, in a great number of particulars, that common circumſtance in which they all agree, or to extract it, pure and unmixed, from the other ſuperfluous circumſtances. Every judgment or concluſion with them is particular. They cannot enlarge their view to thoſe univerſal propoſitions, which comprehend under them an infinite number of individuals, and include a whole ſcience in a ſingle theorem. Their eye is confounded with ſuch an extenſive proſpect; and the concluſions derived from it, even though clearly expreſſed, ſeem intricate and obſcure. But however intricate they may ſeem, it is certain, that general principles, if juſt and ſound, muſt always prevail in the general courſe of things, though they may fail in particular caſes; and it is the chief buſineſs of philoſophers to regard the general courſe of things. I may add, that it is alſo the chief buſineſs of politicians; eſpecially in the domeſtic government of the ſtate, where the public good, which is, or ought to be, their object, depends on the concur-

rence of a multitude of cauſes; not, as in foreign politics, on accidents and chances, and the caprices of a few perſons. This therefore makes the difference between *particular* deliberations and *general* reaſonings, and renders ſubtility and refinement much more ſuitable to the latter than to the former.

I thought this introduction neceſſary before the following diſcourſes on *commerce*, *money*, *intereſt*, *balance of trade* &c. where, perhaps, there will occur ſome principles which are uncommon, and which may ſeem too refined and ſubtile for ſuch vulgar ſubjects. If falſe, let them be rejected: but no one ought to entertain a prejudice againſt them, merely becauſe they are out of the common road.

The greatneſs of a ſtate, and the happineſs of its ſubjects, how independent ſoever they may be ſuppoſed in ſome reſpects, are commonly allowed to be inſeparable with regard to commerce; and as private men receive greater ſecurity, in the poſſeſſion of their trade and riches, from the power of the public; ſo the public becomes powerful in proportion to the opulence and extenſive commerce of private men. This maxim is true in general; though I cannot forbear thinking, that it may poſſibly admit of exceptions, and that we often eſtabliſh it with too little reſerve and limitation. There may be ſome circumſtances, where the commerce and riches and luxury of individuals, inſtead of adding ſtrength to the public, will ſerve only to thin its armies, and diminiſh its authority among the neighbouring nations. Man is a very variable being, and ſuſceptible of many different opinions, principles, and rules of conduct. What may be true, while he adheres to one way of thinking, will be found falſe, when he has embraced an oppoſite ſet of manners and opinions.

The bulk of every ſtate may be divided into *huſbandmen* and *manufacturers*. The former are employed in the culture of the land; the latter works up the materials furniſhed by the former into all the com-

commodities which are neceſſary or ornamental to human life. As ſoon as men quit their ſavage ſtate, where they live chiefly by hunting and fiſhing, they muſt fall into theſe two claſſes; though the arts of agriculture employ *at firſt* the moſt numerous part of the ſociety *. Time and experience improve ſo much theſe arts, that the land may eaſily maintain a much greater number of men, than thoſe who are immediately employed in its culture, or who furniſh the more neceſſary manufactures to ſuch as are ſo employed.

If theſe ſuperfluous hands apply themſelves to the finer arts, which are commonly denominated the arts of *luxury*, they add to the happineſs of the ſtate; ſince they afford to many the opportunity of receiving enjoyments, with which they would otherwiſe have been unacquainted. But may not another ſcheme be propoſed for the employment of theſe ſuperfluous hands? May not the ſovereign lay claim to them, and employ them in fleets and armies, to encreaſe the dominions of the ſtate abroad, and ſpread its fame over diſtant nations? It is certain, that the fewer deſires and wants are found in the proprietors and labourers of land, the fewer hands do they employ; and conſequently the ſuperfluities of the land, inſtead of maintaining tradeſmen and manufacturers, may ſupport fleets and armies to a much greater extent, than where a great many arts are required to miniſter to the luxury of particular perſons. Here therefore ſeems to be a kind of oppoſition between the greatneſs of the ſtate and the happineſs of the ſubject. A ſtate is never greater than when all its ſuperfluous

* Monſ. MELON, in his political eſſay on commerce, aſſerts, that even at preſent, if you divide FRANCE into 20 parts, 16 are labourers or peaſants; two only artizens; one belonging to the law, church, and military; and one merchants, financiers, and bourgeos. This calculation is certainly very erroneous. In FRANCE, ENGLAND, and indeed moſt parts of EUROPE, half of the inhabitants live in cities; and even of thoſe who live in the country, a great number are artizans, perhaps above a third

hands are employed in the ſervice of the public. The eaſe and convenience of private perſons require, that theſe hands ſhould be employed in their ſervice. The one can never be ſatisfied but at the expence of the other. As the ambition of the ſovereign muſt entrench on the luxury of individuals; ſo the luxury of individuals muſt diminiſh the force, and check the ambition of the ſovereign.

Nor is this reaſoning merely chimerical; but is founded on hiſtory and experience. The republic of SPARTA was certainly more powerful than any ſtate now in the world, conſiſting of an equal number of people; and this was owing entirely to the want of commerce and luxury. The HELOTES were the labourers: The SPARTANS were the ſoldiers or gentlemen. It is evident, that the labour of the HELOTES could not have maintained ſo great a number of SPARTANS, had theſe latter lived in eaſe and delicacy, and given employment to a great variety of trades and manufactures. The like policy may be remarked in ROME. And, indeed, throughout all ancient hiſtory, it is obſervable, that the ſmalleſt republics raiſed and maintained greater armies, than ſtates, conſiſting of triple the number of inhabitants, are able to ſupport at preſent. It is computed, that, in all EUROPEAN nations, the proportion between ſoldiers and people does not exceed one to a hundred. But we read, that the city of ROME alone, with its ſmall territory, raiſed and maintained, in early times, ten legions againſt the LATINS. ATHENS, the whole of whoſe dominions was not larger than YORKSHIRE, ſent to the expedition againſt SICILY near forty thouſand men*. DIONYSIUS the elder, it is ſaid, maintained a ſtanding army of a hundred thouſand foot and ten thouſand horſe, beſides a large fleet of four hundred ſail†; though his territories extended no farther than the

* THUCYDIDES, lib. vii.

† DIOD. SIC. lib. vii. This account, I own, is ſomewhat ſuſpicious, not to ſay worſe; chiefly becauſe this army was not compoſed of citizens, but of mercenary forces.

the city of SYRACUSE, about a third of the island of SICILY, and some sea-port towns and garrisons on the coast of ITALY and ILLYRICUM. It is true, the ancient armies in time of war, subsisted much upon plunder: But did not the enemy plunder in their turn? which was a more ruinous way of levying a tax, than any other that could be devised. In short, no probable reason can be assigned for the great power of the more ancient states above the modern, but their want of commerce and luxury. Few artizans were maintained by the labour of the farmers, and therefore more soldiers might live upon it. LIVY says, that ROME, in his time, would find it difficult to raise as large an army as that which, in her early days, she sent out against the GAULS and LATINS *. Instead of those soldiers who fought for liberty and empire in CAMILLUS's time, there were in AUGUSTUS's days, musicians, painters, cooks, players, and taylors; and if the land was equally cultivated at both periods, it could certainly maintain equal numbers in the one profession as in the other. They added nothing to the mere necessaries of life, in the latter period more than in the former.

It is natural on this occasion to ask, whether sovereigns may not return to the maxims of ancient policy, and consult their own interest in this respect, more than the happiness of their subjects? I answer, that it appears to me almost impossible; and that because ancient policy was violent, and contrary to the more natural and usual course of things. It is well known with what peculiar laws SPARTA was governed, and what a progidy that republic is justly esteemed by every one, who has considered human nature, as it has displayed itself in other nations, and other ages. Were the testimony of history less positive and circumstantial, such a government would appear a mere philosophical whim or fiction, and im-

* TITI LIVII lib. vii. cap. 24. "Adeo in quæ laboramus," says he "sola crevimus, divitias luxuriamque".

poſſible ever to be reduced to practice. And though the ROMAN and other ancient republics were ſupported on principles ſomewhat more natural, yet was there an extraordinary concurrence of circumſtances to make them ſubmit to ſuch grievous burthens. They were free ſtates; they were ſmall ones; and the age being martial, all their neighbours were continually in arms. Freedom naturally begets public ſpirit, eſpecially in ſmall ſtates; and this public ſpirit, this *amor patriæ*, muſt encreaſe, when the public is almoſt in continual alarm, and men are obliged every moment to expoſe themſelves to the greateſt dangers for its defence. A continual ſucceſſion of wars makes every citizen a ſoldier: He takes the field in his turn: And during his ſervice he is chiefly maintained by himſelf. This ſervice is indeed equivalent to a heavy tax; yet is it leſs felt by a people addicted to arms, who fight for honour and revenge more than pay, and are unacquainted with gain and induſtry as well as pleaſure *. Not to mention the great equality of fortunes among the inhabitants of the ancient republics, where every field belonging to a different proprietor, was able to maintain a family, and rendered the numbers of citizens very conſiderable, even without trade and manufactures.

But though the want of trade and manufactures, among a free and very martial people, may *ſometimes* have no other effect than to render the public more powerful, it is certain, that, in the common courſe of human affairs, it will have a quite contrary tendency. Sovereigns muſt take mankind as they find them, and cannot pretend to introduce any violent change in their principles and ways of thinking. A long courſe of time, with a variety of accidents and circumſtances, are requiſite to produce thoſe great revolutions, which ſo much diverſify the face of human affairs. And the leſs natural any ſet of principles are, which ſupport a particular ſociety, the more difficulty will

*See NOTE [O].

will a legiſlator meet with in raiſing and cultivating them. It is his beſt policy to comply with the common bent of mankind, and give it all the improvements of which it is ſuſceptible. Now, according to the moſt natural courſe of things, induſtry and arts and trade increaſe the power of the ſovereign, as well as the happineſs of the ſubjects; and that policy is violent, which aggrandizes the public by the poverty of individuals. This will eaſily appear from a few conſiderations, which will preſent to us the conſequences of ſloth and barbarity.

Where manufactures and mechanic arts are not cultivated, the bulk of the people muſt apply themſelves to agriculture; and if their ſkill and induſtry increaſe, there muſt ariſe a great ſuperfluity from their labour, beyond what ſuffices to maintain them. They have no temptation, therefore, to encreaſe their ſkill and induſtry; ſince they cannot exchange that ſuperfluity for any commodities, which may ſerve either to their pleaſure or vanity. A habit of indolence naturally prevails. The greater part of the land lies uncultivated. What is cultivated, yields not its utmoſt for want of ſkill and aſſiduity in the farmers. If at any time the public exigencies require that great numbers ſhould be employed in the public ſervice, the labour of the people furniſhes now no ſuperfluities, by which theſe numbers can be maintained. The labourers cannot encreaſe their ſkill and induſtry on a ſudden, Lands uncultivated cannot be brought into tillage for ſome years. The armies, mean while, muſt either make ſudden and violent conqueſts, or diſband for want of ſubſiſtence. A regular attack or defence, therefore, is not to be expected from ſuch a people; and their ſoldiers muſt be as ignorant and unſkillful as their farmers and manufacturers.

Every thing in the world is purchaſed by labour; and our paſſions are the only cauſes of labour. When a nation abounds in manufactures and mechanic arts,

the proprietors of land, as well as the farmers, ſtudy agriculture as a ſcience, and redouble their induſtry and attention. The ſuperfluity which ariſes from their labour is not loſt; but is exchanged with manufactures for thoſe commodities which mens luxury now makes them covet. By this means, land furniſhes a great deal more of the neceſſaries of life, than what ſuffices for thoſe who cultivate it. In times of peace and tranquillity, this ſuperfluity goes to the maintenance of manufacturers and the improvers of liberal arts. But it is eaſy for the public to convert many of theſe manufacturers into ſoldiers, and maintain them by that ſuperfluity which ariſes from the labour of the farmers. Accordingly we find, that this is the caſe in all civilized governments. When the ſovereign raiſes an army, what is the conſequence? He impoſes a tax. This tax obliges all the people to retrench what is leaſt neceſſary to their ſubſiſtence. Thoſe who labour in ſuch commodities, muſt either enliſt in the troops, or turn themſelves to agriculture, and thereby oblige ſome labourers to enliſt for want of buſineſs. And to conſider the matter abſtractedly, manufactures encreaſe the power of the ſtate only as they ſtore up ſo much labour, and that of a kind to which the public may lay claim, without depriving any one of the neceſſaries of life. The more labour, therefore, is employed beyond mere neceſſaries, the more powerful is any ſtate; ſince the perſons engaged in that labour may eaſily be converted to the public ſervice. In a ſtate without manufactures, there may be the ſame number of hands, but there is not the ſame quantity of labour, nor of the ſame kind. All the labour is there beſtowed upon neceſſaries, which can admit of little or no abatement.

Thus the greatneſs of the ſovereign and the happineſs of the ſtate are, in a great meaſure, united with regard to trade and manufactures. It is a violent method, and in moſt caſes impracticable, to oblige the labourer to toil, in order to raiſe from the land

more than what subsists himself and family. Furnish him with manufactures and commodities, and he will do it of himself. Afterwards you will find it easy to seize some part of his superfluous labour, and employ it in the public service, without giving him his wonted return. Being accustomed to industry, he will think this less grievous, than if, at once, you obliged him to an augmentation of labour without any reward. The case is the same with regard to the other members of the state. The greater is the stock of labour of all kinds, the greater quantity may be taken from the heap, without making any sensible alteration in it.

A public granary of corn, a storehouse of cloth, a magazine of arms; all these must be allowed real riches and strength in any state. Trade and industry are really nothing but a stock of labour, which, in times of peace and tranquillity, is employed for the ease and satisfaction of individuals; but in the exigencies of state, may, in part, be turned to public advantage. Could we convert a city into a kind of fortified camp, and infuse into each breast so martial a genius, and such a passion for public good, as to make every one willing to undergo the greatest hardships for the sake of the public; these affections might now, as in ancient times, prove alone a sufficient spur to industry, and support the community. It would then be advantageous, as in camps, to banish all arts and luxury: and, by restrictions on equipage and tables, make the provisions and forage last longer, than if the army were loaded with a number of superfluous retainers. But as these principles are too disinterested, and too difficult to support, it is requisite to govern men by other passions, and animate him with a spirit of avarice and industry, art and luxury. The camp is, in this case, loaded with a superfluous retinue; but the provisions flow in proportionably larger. The harmony of the whole is still supported; and the natural bent of the mind being

ing more complied with individuals, as well as the public, find their account in the obſervance of thoſe maxims.

The ſame method of reaſoning will let us ſee the advantage of *foreign* commerce, in augmenting the power of the ſtate, as well as the riches and happineſs of the ſubject. It encreaſes the ſtock of labour in the nation; and the ſovereign may convert what ſhare of it he finds neceſſary to the ſervice of the public. Foreign trade, by its imports, furniſhes materials for new manufactures; and by its exports, it produces labour in particular commodities, which could not be conſumed at home. In ſhort, a kingdom, that has a large import and export, muſt abound more with induſtry, and that employed upon delicacies and luxuries, than a kingdom which reſts contented with its native commodities. It is, therefore, more powerful, as well as richer and happier. The individuals reap the benefit of theſe commodities, ſo far as they gratify the ſenſes and appetites. And the public is alſo a gainer, while a greater ſtock of labour is, by this means, ſtored up againſt any public exigency: that is, a greater number of laborious men are maintained, who may be diverted to the public ſervice, without robbing any one of the neceſſaries, or even the chief conveniences, of life.

If we conſult hiſtory, we ſhall find, that, in moſt nations, foreign trade has preceded any refinement in home manufactures, and given birth to domeſtic luxury. The temptation is ſtronger to make uſe of foreign commodities, which are ready for uſe, and which are entirely new to us, than to make improvements on any domeſtic commodity, which always advance by ſlow degrees, and never affect us by their novelty. The profit is alſo very great, in exporting what is ſuperfluous at home, and what bears no price to foreign nations, whoſe ſoil or climate is not favourable to that commodity. Thus men become acquainted with the *pleaſures* of luxury and the *profits*

of commerce; and their *delicacy* and *induſtry*, being once awakened, carry them on to farther improvements, in every branch of domeſtic as well as foreign trade. And this perhaps is the chief advantage which ariſes from a commerce with ſtrangers. It rouſes men from their indolence; and preſenting the gayer and more opulent part of the nation with objects of luxury, which they never before dreamed of, raiſes in them a deſire of a more ſplendid way of life than what their anceſtors enjoyed. And at the ſame time, the few merchants, who poſſeſs the ſecret of this importation and exportation, make great profits; and becoming rivals in wealth to the ancient nobility, tempt other adventurers to become their rivals in commerce. Imitation ſoon diffuſes all thoſe arts; while domeſtic manufactures emulate the foreign in their improvements, and work up every home commodity to the utmoſt perfection of which it is ſuſceptible. Their own ſteel and iron, in ſuch laborious hands, become equal to the gold and rubies of the INDIES.

When the affairs of the ſociety are once brought to this ſituation, a nation may loſe moſt of its foreign trade, and yet continue a great and powerful people. If ſtrangers will not take any particular commodity of ours, we muſt ceaſe to labour in it. The ſame hands will turn themſelves towards ſome refinement in other commodities, which may be wanted at home. And there muſt always be materials for them to work upon; till every perſon in the ſtate, who poſſeſſes riches, enjoys as great plenty of home commodities, and thoſe in as great perfection, as he deſires: which can never poſſibly happen. CHINA is repreſented as one of the moſt flouriſhing empires in the world; though it has very little commerce beyond its own territories.

It will not, I hope, be conſidered as a ſuperfluous digreſſion, if I here obſerve, that as the multitude of mechanical arts is advantageous, ſo is the great number of perſons to whoſe ſhare the productions of theſe

arts

arts fall. A too great disproportion among the citizens weakens any state. Every person, if possible, ought to enjoy the fruits of his labour, in a full possession of all the necessaries, and many of the conveniences of life. No one can doubt, but such an equality is most suitable to human nature, and diminishes much less from the *happiness* of the rich, than it adds to that of the poor. It also augments the *power of the state*, and makes any extraordinary taxes or impositions be paid with more cheerfulness. Where the riches are engrossed by a few, these must contribute very largely to the supplying of the public necessities. But when the riches are dispersed among multitudes, the burthen feels light on every shoulder, and the taxes make not a very sensible difference on any one's way of living.

Add to this, that where the riches are in few hands, these must enjoy all the power, and will readily conspire to lay the whole burthen on the poor, and oppress them still farther, to the discouragement of all industry.

In this circumstance consists the great advantage of England above any nation at present in the world, or that appears in the records of any story. It is true, the English feel some disadvantages in foreign trade by the high price of labour, which is in part the effect of the riches of their artizans as well as of the plenty of money: But as foreign trade is not the most material circumstance, it is not to be put in competition with the happiness of so many millions. And if there were no more to endear to them that free government under which they live, this alone were sufficient. The poverty of the common people is a natural, if not an infallible, effect of absolute monarchy; though I doubt, whether it be always true, on the other hand, that their riches are an infallible result of liberty. Liberty must be attended with particular accidents, and a certain turn of thinking, in order to produce that effect. Lord Bacon, account-

accounting for the great advantages obtained by the ENGLISH in their wars with FRANCE, aſcribes them chiefly to the ſuperior eaſe and plenty of the common people amongſt the former; yet the government of the two kingdoms was, at that time, pretty much alike. Where the labourers and artizans are accuſtomed to work for low wages, and to retain but a ſmall part of the fruits of their labour, it is difficult for them, even in a free government, to better their condition, or conſpire among themſelves to heighten their wages. But even where they are accuſtomed to a more plentiful way of life, it is eaſy for the rich, in an arbitrary government, to conſpire againſt *them*, and throw the whole burthen of the taxes on their ſhoulders.

It may ſeem an odd poſition, that the poverty of the common people in FRANCE, ITALY, and SPAIN, is, in ſome meaſure, owing to the ſuperior riches of the ſoil and happineſs of the climate; yet there want not reaſons to juſtify this paradox. In ſuch a fine mould or ſoil as that of thoſe more ſouthern regions, agriculture is an eaſy art; and one man, with a couple of ſorry horſes, will be able, in a ſeaſon, to cultivate as much land as will pay a pretty conſiderable rent to the proprietor. All the art, which the farmer knows, is to leave his ground fallow for a year, as ſoon as it is exauſted; and the warmth of the ſun alone, and temperature of the climate, enrich it, and reſtore its fertility. Such poor peaſants, therefore, require only a ſimple maintenance for their labour. They have no ſtock or riches which claim more; and at the ſame time, they are for ever dependant on their landlord, who gives no leaſes, nor fears that his land will be ſpoiled by the ill methods of cultivation. In ENGLAND, the land is rich but coarſe; muſt be cultivated at a great expence; and produces ſlender crops when not carefully managed, and by a method which gives not the full profit but in a courſe of ſeveral years. A farmer, therefore, in ENGLAND muſt have a conſiderable

ſiderable ſtock, and a long leaſe, which beget proportional profits. The fine vineyards of CHAMPAGNE and BURGUNDY, that often yield to the landlord above five pounds *per* acre, are cultivated by peaſants who have ſcarcely bread: The reaſon is, that ſuch peaſants need no ſtock but their own limbs, with inſtruments of huſbandry which they can buy for twenty ſhillings. The farmers are commonly in ſome better circumſtances in thoſe countries: But the graſiers are moſt at their eaſe of all thoſe who cultivate the land. The reaſon is ſtill the ſame: Men muſt have profits proportionable to their expenſe and hazard. Where ſo conſiderable a number of the labouring poor, as the peaſants and farmers, are in very low circumſtances, all the reſt muſt partake of their poverty, whether the government of that nation be monarchical or republican.

We may form a ſimilar remark with regard to the general hiſtory of mankind. What is the reaſon, why no people, living between the tropics, could ever yet attain to any art or civility, or reach even any police in their government, and any military diſcipline; while few nations in the temperate climates have been altogether deprived of theſe advantages? It is probable, that one cauſe of this phænomenon is the warmth and equality of weather in the torrid zone, which render clothes and houſes leſs requiſite for the inhabitants, and thereby remove, in part, that neceſſity which is the great ſpur to induſtry and invention. *Curis acuens mortalia corda.* Not to mention, that the fewer goods or poſſeſſions of this kind any people enjoy, the fewer quarrels are likely to ariſe amongſt them, and the leſs neceſſity will there be for a ſettled police or regular authority to protect and defend them from foreign enemies, or from each other.

ESSAY

ESSAY II.

Of Refinement in the Arts.

LUXURY is a word of an uncertain ſignification, and may be taken in a good as well as in a bad ſenſe. In general, it means great refinement in the gratification of the ſenſes; and any degree of it may be innocent or blameable, according to the age, or country, or condition of the perſon. The bounds between the virtue and the vice cannot here be exactly fixed, more than in other moral ſubjects. To imagine that the gratifying of any ſenſe, or the indulging of any delicacy in meat, drink, or apparel, is of itſelf a vice, can never enter into a head, that is not diſordered by the frenzies of enthuſiaſm. I have, indeed, heard of a monk abroad, who, becauſe the windows of his cell opened upon a noble proſpect, made a *covenant with his eyes* never to turn that way, or receive ſo ſenſual a gratification. And ſuch is the crime of drinking Champagne or Burgundy, preferably to ſmall beer or porter. Theſe indulgencies are only vices when they are purſued at the expence of ſome virtue, as liberality or charity; in like manner as they are follies, when for them a man ruins his fortune, and reduces himſelf to want and beggary. Where they entrench upon no virtue, but leave ample ſubject whence to provide for friends, family, and every proper object of generoſity or compaſſion, they are entirely innocent, and have in every age been acknowledged ſuch by almoſt all moraliſts. To be entirely occupied with the luxury of the table, for inſtance, without any reliſh for the pleaſures of

ambition, ſtudy, or converſation, is a mark of ſtupidity, and is incompatible with any vigour of temper or genius. To confine one's expence entirely to ſuch a gratification, without regard to friends or family, is an indication of a heart deſtitute of humanity or benevolence; but if a man reſerve time ſufficient for all laudable purſuits, and money ſufficient for all generous purpoſes, he is free from every ſhadow of blame or reproach.

Since luxury may be conſidered either as innocent or blameable, one may be ſurpriſed at thoſe prepoſterous opinions which have been entertained concerning it; while men of libertine principles beſtow praiſes even on vicious luxury, and repreſent it as highly advantageous to ſociety; and on the other hand, men of ſevere morals blame even the moſt innocent luxury, and repreſent it as the ſource of all the corruptions, diſorders, and factions, incident to civil government. We ſhall here endeavour to correct both theſe extremes, by proving, *firſt*, that the ages of refinement are both the happieſt and moſt virtuous; *ſecondly*, that wherever luxury ceaſes to be innocent, it alſo ceaſes to be beneficial; and when carried a degree too far, is a quality pernicious, though perhaps not the moſt pernicious, to political ſociety.

To prove the firſt point, we need but conſider the effects of refinement both on *private* and on *public* life. Human happineſs, according to the moſt received notions, ſeems to conſiſt in three ingredients, action, pleaſure, and indolence: And though theſe ingredients ought to be mixed in different proportions, according to the particular diſpoſition of the perſon; yet no one ingredient can be entirely wanting, without deſtroying, in ſome meaſure, the reliſh of the whole compoſition. Indolence or repoſe, indeed, ſeems not of itſelf to contribute much to our enjoyment; but, like ſleep, is requiſite as an indulgence to the weakneſs of human nature, which cannot ſupport an uninterrupted courſe of buſineſs or pleaſure. That quick

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march of the ſpirits which takes a man from himſelf, and chiefly gives ſatisfaction, does in the end exhauſt the mind, and requires ſome intervals of repoſe, which, though agreeable for a moment, yet, if prolonged, beget a languor and lethargy that deſtroy all enjoyment. Education, cuſtom, and example, have a mighty influence in turning the mind to any of theſe purſuits; and it muſt be owned, that where they promote a reliſh for action and pleaſure, they are ſo far favourable to human happineſs. In times when induſtry and the arts flouriſh, men are kept in perpetual occupation, and enjoy, as their reward, the occupation itſelf, as well as thoſe pleaſures which are the fruit of their labour. The mind acquires new vigour; enlarges its powers and faculties; and by an aſſiduity in honeſt induſtry, both ſatisfies its natural appetites, and prevents the growth of unnatural ones, which commonly ſpring up when nouriſhed by eaſe and idleneſs. Baniſh thoſe arts from ſociety, you deprive men both of action and of pleaſure; and, leaving nothing but indolence in their place, you even deſtroy the reliſh of indolence, which never is agreeable but when it ſucceeds to labour, and recruits the ſpirits, exhauſted by too much application and fatigue.

Another advantage of induſtry and of refinements in the mechanical arts is, that they commonly produce ſome refinements in the liberal; nor can one be carried to perfection, without being accompanied, in ſome degree, with the other. The ſame age which produces great philoſophers and politicians, renowned generals and poets, uſually abounds with ſkilful weavers and ſhip-carpenters. We cannot reaſonably expect that a piece of woollen cloth will be wrought to perfection in a nation which is ignorant of aſtronomy, or where ethics are neglected. The ſpirit of the age affects all the arts; and the minds of men, being once roufed from their lethargy, and put into a fermentation, turn themſelves on all ſides, and carry improvements into every art and ſcience. Profound

ignorance is totally baniſhed, and men enjoy the privilege of rational creatures, to think as well as to act, to cultivate the pleaſures of the mind as well as thoſe of the body.

The more theſe refined arts advance, the more ſociable men become: Nor is it poſſible, that, when enriched with ſcience, and poſſeſſed of a fund of converſation, they ſhould be contented to remain in ſolitude, or live with their fellow-citizens in that diſtant manner which is peculiar to ignorant and barbarous nations. They flock into cities; love to receive and communicate knowledge; to ſhow their wit or their breeding; their taſte in converſation or living, in clothes or furniture. Curioſity allures the wife; vanity the fooliſh; and pleaſure both. Particular clubs and ſocieties are every where formed: Both ſexes meet in an eaſy and ſociable manner; and the tempers of men, as well as their behaviour, refine apace. So that, beſide the improvements which they receive from knowledge and the liberal arts, it is impoſſible but they muſt feel an increaſe of humanity, from the very habit of converſing together, and contributing to each other's pleaſure and entertainment. Thus *induſtry*, *knowledge*, and *humanity*, are linked together by an indiſſoluble chain, and are found, from experience as well as reaſon, to be peculiar to the moſt poliſhed, and, what are commonly denominated, the more luxurious ages.

Nor are theſe advantages attended with diſadvantages that bear any proportion to them. The more men refine upon pleaſure, the leſs will they indulge in exceſſes of any kind; becauſe nothing is more deſtructive to true pleaſure than ſuch exceſſes. One may ſafely affirm, that the TARTARS are oftener guilty of beaſtly gluttony, when they feaſt on their dead horſes, than EUROPEAN courtiers with all their refinements of cookery. And if libertine love, or even infidelity to the marriage-bed, be more frequent in polite ages, when it is often regarded only as a piece of

of gallantry; drunkenneſs, on the other hand, is much leſs common: A vice more odious, and more pernicious both to mind and body. And in this matter I would appeal, not only to an Ovid or a Petronius, but to a Seneca or a Cato. We know that Cæsar, during Cataline's conſpiracy, being neceſſitated to put into Cato's hands a *billet-doux*, which diſcovered an intrigue with Servilia, Cato's own ſiſter, that ſtern philoſopher threw it back to him with indignation; and, in the bitterneſs of his wrath, gave him the appellation of drunkard, as a term more opprobrious than that with which he could more juſtly have reproached him.

But induſtry, knowledge, and humanity, are not advantageous in private life alone; They diffuſe their beneficial influence on the *public*, and render the government as great and flouriſhing as they make individuals happy and proſperous. The encreaſe and conſumption of all the commodities, which ſerve to the ornament and pleaſure of life, are advantageous to ſociety; becauſe, at the ſame time that they multiply thoſe innocent gratifications to individuals, they are a kind of *ſtorehouſe* of labour, which, in the exigencies of ſtate, may be turned to the public ſervice. In a nation, where there is no demand for ſuch ſuperfluities, men ſink into indolence, loſe all enjoyment of life, and are uſeleſs to the public, which cannot maintain or ſupport its fleets and armies, from the induſtry of ſuch ſlothful members.

The bounds of all the European kingdoms are, at preſent, nearly the ſame they were two hundred years ago: But what a difference is there in the power and grandeur of thoſe kingdoms? Which can be aſcribed to nothing but the encreaſe of art and induſtry. When Charles VIII. of France invaded Italy, he carried with him about 20,000 men: Yet this armament ſo exhauſted the nation, as we learn from Guicciardin, that for ſome years it was not able to make ſo great an effort. The late king

of FRANCE, in time of war, kept in pay above 400,000 men*. though, from MAZARINE's death to his own, he was engaged in a courſe of wars that laſted near thirty years.

This induſtry is much promoted by the knowledge inſeparable from ages of art and refinement; as, on the other hand, this knowledge enables the public to make the beſt advantage of the induſtry of its ſubjects. Laws, order, police, diſcipline; theſe can never be carried to any degree of perfection, before human reaſon has refined itſelf by exerciſe, and by an application to the more vulgar arts, at leaſt of commerce and manufacture. Can we expect, that a government will be well-modelled by a people, who know not how to make a ſpinning-wheel, or to employ a loom to advantage? Not to mention, that all ignorant ages are infeſted with ſuperſtition, which throws the government off its bias, and diſturbs men in the purſuit of their intereſt and happineſs.

Knowledge in the arts of government naturally begets mildneſs and moderation, by inſtructing men in the advantages of humane maxims above rigour and ſeverity, which drive ſubjects into rebellion, and make the return to ſubmiſſion impracticable, by cutting off all hopes of pardon. When the tempers of men are ſoftened, as well as their knowledge improved, this humanity appears ſtill more conſpicuous, and is the chief characteriſtic which diſtinguiſhes a civilized age from times of barbarity and ignorance. Factions are then leſs inveterate, revolutions leſs tragical, authority leſs ſevere, and ſeditions leſs frequent. Even foreign wars abate of their cruelty; and after the field of battle, where honour and intereſt ſteel men againſt compaſſion as well as fear, the combatants diveſt themſelves of the brute, and reſume the man.

Nor need we fear, that men, by loſing their ferocity, will loſe their martial ſpirit, or become leſs undaunted and vigorous in defence of their country or their

* The inſcription on the PLACE-DE VENDOME ſays 440,000.

their liberty. The arts have no such effect in enervating either the mind or body. On the contrary, industry, their inseparable attendant, adds new force to both. And if anger, which is said to be the whetstone of courage, loses somewhat of its asperity, by politeness and refinement; a sense of honour, which is a stronger, more constant, and more governable principle, acquires fresh vigour, by that elevation of genius which arises from knowledge and a good education. Add to this, that courage can neither have any duration, nor be of any use, when not accompanied with discipline and martial skill, which are seldom found among a barbarous people. The ancients remarked, that DATAMES was the only barbarian that ever knew the art of war. And PYRRHUS, seeing the ROMANS marshal their army with some art and skill, said with surprise, *These barbarians have nothing barbarous in their discipline!* It is observable, that, as the old ROMANS, by applying themselves solely to war, were almost the only uncivilized people that ever possessed military discipline; so the modern ITALIANS are the only civilized people, among EUROPEANS, that ever wanted courage and a martial spirit. Those who would ascribe this effeminancy of the ITALIANS to their luxury, or politeness, or application to the arts, need but consider the FRENCH and ENGLISH, whose bravery is as unconteſtable, as their love for the arts, and their assiduity in commerce. The ITALIAN historians give us a more satisfactory reason for this degeneracy of their countrymen. They show us how the sword was dropped at once by all the ITALIAN sovereigns; while the VENETIAN aristocracy was jealous of its subjects, the FLORENTINE democracy applied itself entirely to commerce; ROME was governed by priests, and NAPLES by women. War then became the business of soldiers of fortune, who spared one another, and, to the astonishment of the world, could engage a whole day in what they called a battle, and

return at night to their camp, without the leaſt bloodſhed.

What has chiefly induced ſevere moraliſts to declaim againſt refinement in the arts, is the example of ancient ROME, which, joining to its poverty and ruſticity, virtue and public ſpirit, roſe to ſuch a ſurpriſing height of grandeur and liberty; but, having learned from its conquered provinces the ASIATIC luxury, fell into every kind of corruption; whence aroſe ſedition and civil wars, attended at laſt with the total loſs of liberty. All the LATIN claſſics, whom we peruſe in our infancy, are full of theſe ſentiments, and univerſally aſcribe the ruin of their ſtate to the arts and riches imported from the Eaſt: Inſomuch that SALLUST repreſents a taſte for painting as a vice, no leſs than lewdneſs and drinking. And ſo popular were theſe ſentiments, during the later ages of the republic, that this author abounds in praiſes of the old rigid ROMAN virtue, though himſelf the moſt egregious inſtance of modern luxury and corruption; ſpeaks contemptuouſly of the GRECIAN eloquence, though the moſt elegant writer in the world; nay, employs prepoſterous digreſſions and declamations to this purpoſe, though a model of taſte and correctneſs.

But it would be eaſy to prove, that theſe writers miſtook the cauſe of the diſorders in the ROMAN ſtate, and aſcribed to luxury and the arts, what really proceeded from an ill-modelled government, and the unlimited extent of conqueſts. Refinement on the pleaſures and conveniences of life has no natural tendency to beget venality and corruption. The value which all men put upon any particular pleaſure depends on compariſon and experience; nor is a porter leſs greedy of money, which he ſpends on bacon and brandy, than a courtier, who purchaſes champagne and ortolans. Riches are valuable at all times, and to all men; becauſe they always purchaſe pleaſures, ſuch as men are accuſtomed to, and deſire: Nor can

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any thing restrain or regulate the love of money, but a sense of honour and virtue; which, if it be not nearly equal at all times, will naturally abound most in ages of knowledge and refinement.

Of all European kingdoms, Poland seems the most defective in the arts of war as well as peace, mechanical as well as liberal; yet it is there that venality and corruption do most prevail. The nobles seem to have preserved their crown elective for no other purpose, than regularly to sell it to the highest bidder. This is almost the only species of commerce with which that people are acquainted.

The liberties of England, so far from decaying since the improvements in the arts, have never flourished so much as during that period. And though corruption may seem to encrease of late years; this is chiefly to be ascribed to our established liberty, when our princes have found the impossibility of governing without parliaments, or of terrifying parliaments by the phantom of prerogative. Not to mention, that this corruption or venality prevails much more among the electors than the elected: and therefore cannot justly be ascribed to any refinements in luxury.

If we consider the matter in a proper light, we shall find, that a progress in the arts is rather favourable to liberty, and has a natural tendency to preserve, if not produce, a free government. In rude unpolished nations, where the arts are neglected, all labour is bestowed on the cultivation of the ground; and the whole society is divided into two classes, proprietors of land, and their vassals or tenants. The latter are necessarily dependent, and fitted for slavery and subjection; especially where they possess no riches, and are not valued for their knowledge in agriculture; as must always be the case where the arts are neglected. The former naturally erect themselves into petty tyrants; and must either submit to an absolute master, for the sake of peace and order;

order; or if they will preſerve their independency, like the ancient barons, they muſt fall into feuds and conteſts among themſelves, and throw the whole ſociety into ſuch confuſion, as is perhaps worſe than the moſt deſpotic government. But where luxury nouriſhes commerce and induſtry, the peaſants, by a proper cultivation of the land, become rich and independent: while the tradeſmen and merchants acquire a ſhare of the property, and draw authority and conſideration to that middling rank of men, who are the beſt and firmeſt baſis of public liberty. Theſe ſubmit not to ſlavery, like the peaſants, from poverty and meanneſs of ſpirit; and having no hopes of tyrannizing over others, like the barons, they are not tempted, for the ſake of that gratification, to ſubmit to the tyranny of their ſovereign. They covet equal laws, which may ſecure their property, and preſerve them from monarchical, as well as ariſtocratical tyranny.

The Lower Houſe is the ſupport of our popular government; and all the world acknowledges, that it owed its chief influence and conſideration to the encreaſe of commerce, which threw ſuch a balance of property into the hands of the Commons. How inconſiſtent then is it to blame ſo violently a refinement in the arts, and to repreſent it as the bane of liberty and public ſpirit!

To declaim againſt preſent times, and magnify the virtue of remote anceſtors, is a propenſity almoſt inherent in human nature: And as the ſentiments and opinions of civilized ages alone are tranſmitted to poſterity, hence it is that we meet with ſo many ſevere judgments pronounced againſt luxury, and even ſcience; and hence it is that at preſent we give ſo ready an aſſent to them. But the fallacy is eaſily perceived, by comparing different nations that are contemporaries; where we both judge more impartially, and can better ſet in oppoſition thoſe manners, with which we are ſufficiently acquainted. Treachery

ery and cruelty, the moſt pernicious and moſt odious of all vices, ſeem peculiar to uncivilized ages; and, by the refined Greeks and Romans, were aſcribed to all the barbarous nations which ſurrounded them. They might juſtly, therefore, have preſumed, that their own anceſtors, ſo highly celebrated, poſſeſſed no greater virtue, and were as much inferior to their poſterity in honour and humanity, as in taſte and ſcience. An ancient Frank or Saxon may be highly extolled: But I believe every man would think his life or fortune much leſs ſecure in the hands of a Moor or Tartar, than in thoſe of a French or English gentleman, the rank of men the moſt civilized in the moſt civilized nations.

We come now to the *ſecond* poſition which we propoſed to illuſtrate, to wit, that, as innocent luxury, or a refinement in the arts and conveniences of life, is advantageous to the public; ſo wherever luxury ceaſes to be innocent, it alſo ceaſes to be beneficial; and when carried a degree farther, begins to be a quality pernicious, though, perhaps, not the moſt pernicious to political ſociety.

Let us conſider what we call vicious luxury. No gratification, however ſenſual, can of itſelf be eſteemed vicious. A gratification is only vicious, when it engroſſes all a man's expence, and leaves no ability for ſuch acts of duty and generoſity as are required by his ſituation and fortune. Suppoſe, that he correct the vice, and employ part of his expence in the education of his children, in the ſupport of his friends and in relieving the poor; would any prejudice reſult to ſociety? On the contrary, the ſame conſumption would ariſe; and that labour, which, at preſent, is employed only in producing a ſlender gratification to one man, would relieve the neceſſitous, and beſtow ſatisfaction on hundreds. The ſame care and toil that raiſe a diſh of peas at Christmas, would give bread to a whole family during ſix months. To ſay, that without a vicious luxury, the labour would not

not have been employed at all, is only to say, that there is some other defect in human nature, such as indolence, selfishness, inattention to others, for which luxury in some measure provides a remedy; as one poison may be an antidote to another. But virtue, like wholsome food, is better than poisons, however corrected.

Suppose the same number of men, that are at present in GREAT BRITAIN, with the same soil and climate; I ask, Is it not possible for them to be happier, by the most perfect way of life that can be imagined, and by the greatest reformation that Omnipotence itself could work in their temper and disposition? To assert that they cannot, appears evidently ridiculous. As the land is able to maintain more than all its present inhabitants, they could never, in such a UTOPIAN state, feel any other ills than those which arise from bodily sickness: and these are not the half of human miseries. All other ills spring from some vice, either in ourselves or others; and even many of our diseases proceed from the same origin. Remove the vices, and the ills follow. You must only take care to remove all the vices. If you remove part, you may render the matter worse. By banishing *vicious* luxury, without curing sloth and an indifference to others, you only diminish industry in the state, and add nothing to mens charity or their generosity. Let us, therefore, rest contented with asserting, that two opposite vices in a state may be more advantageous than either of them alone: but let us never pronounce vice in itself advantageous. Is it not very inconsistent for an author to assert in one page, that moral distinctions are inventions of politicians for public interest; and in the next page maintain, that vice is advantageous to the public*? And indeed it seems, upon any system of morality, little less than a contradiction in terms, to talk of a vice, which is in general beneficial to society.

* Fable of the Bees.

I thought this reaſoning neceſſary, in order to give ſome light to a philoſophical queſtion, which has been much diſputed in England. I call it a *philoſophical* queſtion, not a *political* one. For whatever may be the conſequence of ſuch a miraculous tranſformation of mankind, as would endow them with every ſpecies of virtue, and free them from every ſpecies of vice; this concerns not the magiſtrate, who aims only at poſſibilities. He cannot cure every vice by ſubſtituting a virtue in its place. Very often he can only cure one vice by another; and in that caſe, he ought to prefer what is leaſt pernicious to ſociety. Luxury, when exceſſive, is the ſource of many ills; but is in general preferable to ſloth and idleneſs, which would commonly ſucceed in its place, and are more hurtful both to private perſons and to the public. When ſloth reigns, a mean uncultivated way of life prevails amongſt individuals, without ſociety, without enjoyment. And if the ſovereign, in ſuch a ſituation, demands the ſervice of his ſubjects, the labour of the ſtate ſuffices only to furniſh the neceſſaries of life to the labourers, and can afford nothing to thoſe who are employed in the public ſervice.

ESSAY III.

Of Money.

MONEY is not, properly ſpeaking, one of the ſubjects of commerce; but only the inſtrument which men have agreed upon to facilitate the exchange of one commodity for another. It is none of

of the wheels of trade: It is the oil which renders the motion of the wheels more ſmooth and eaſy. If we conſider any one kingdom by itſelf, it is evident, that the greater or leſs plenty of money is of no conſequence; ſince the prices of commodities are always proportioned to the plenty of money, and a crown in HARRY VII.'s time ſerved the ſame purpoſe as a pound does at preſent. It is only the *public* which draws any advantage from the greater plenty of money; and that only in its wars and negociations with foreign ſtates. And this is the reaſon why all rich and trading countries from CARTAHGE to GREAT BRITAIN and HOLLAND, have employed mercenary troops, which they hired from their poorer neighbours. Were they to make uſe of their native ſubjects, they would find leſs advantage from their ſuperior riches, and from their great plenty of gold and ſilver; ſince the pay of all their ſervants muſt riſe in proportion to the public opulence. Our ſmall army of 20,000 men is maintained at as great expence as a FRENCH army twice as numerous. The ENGLISH fleet, during the late war, required as much money to ſupport it as all the ROMAN legions, which kept the whole world in ſubjection, during the time of the emperors *.

The greater number of people, and their greater induſtry, are ſerviceable in all caſes; at home and abroad, in private and in public. But the greater plenty of money, is very limited in its uſe, and may even ſometimes be a loſs to a nation in its commerce with foreigners.

There ſeems to be a happy concurrence of cauſes in human affairs, which checks the growth of trade and riches, and hinders them from being confined entirely to one people; as might naturally at firſt be dreaded from the advantages of an eſtabliſhed commerce. Where one nation has gotten the ſtart of another in trade, it is very difficult for the latter to

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* See NOTE [P.]

regain the ground it has loſt; becauſe of the ſuperior induſtry and ſkill of the former, and the greater ſtocks, of which its merchants are poſſeſſed, and which enable them to trade on ſo much ſmaller profits. But theſe advantages are compenſated, in ſome meaſures, by the low price of labour in every nation which has not an extenſive commerce, and does not much abound in gold and ſilver. Manufactures, therefore, gradually ſhift their places, leaving thoſe countries and provinces which they have already enriched, and flying to others, whither they are allured by the cheapneſs of proviſions and labour; till they have enriched theſe alſo, and are again baniſhed by the ſame cauſes. And, in general, we may obſerve, that the dearneſs of every thing, from plenty of money, is a diſadvantage, which attends an eſtabliſhed commerce, and ſets bounds to it in every country, by enabling the poorer ſtates to underſel the richer in all foreign markets.

This has made me entertain a doubt concerning the benefit of *banks* and *paper-credit*, which are ſo generally eſteemed advantageous to every nation.

That proviſions and labour ſhould become dear by the encreaſe of trade and money, is, in many reſpects, an inconvenience; but an inconvenience that is unavoidable, and the effect of that public wealth and proſperity which are the end of all our wiſhes. It is compenſated by the advantages which we reap from the poſſeſſion of theſe precious metals, and the weight which they give the nation in all foreign wars and negociations: But there appears no reaſon for encreaſing that inconvenience by a counterfeit money, which foreigners will not accept of in any payment, and which any great diſorder in the ſtate will reduce to nothing. There are, it is true, many people in every rich ſtate, who having large ſums of money, would prefer paper with good ſecurity; as being of more eaſy tranſport and more ſafe cuſtody. If the public provide not a bank, private bankers will take advantage of this circum-

cumſtance; as the goldſmiths formerly did in LONDON, or as the bankers do at preſent in DUBLIN: And therefore it is better, it may be thought, that a public company ſhould enjoy the benefit of that paper-credit, which always will have place in every opulent kingdom. But to endeavour artificially to encreaſe ſuch a credit, can never be the intereſt of any trading nation; but muſt lay them under diſadvantages, by encreaſing money beyond its natural proportion to labour and commodities, and thereby heightening their price to the merchant and manufacturer. And in this view, it muſt be allowed, that no bank could be more advantageous than ſuch a one as locked up all the money it received*, and never augmented the circulating coin, as is uſual, by returning part of its treaſure into commerce. A public bank, by this expedient, might cut off much of the dealings of private bankers and money-jobbers; and though the ſtate bore the charge of ſalaries to the directors and tellers of this bank (for, according to the preceding ſuppoſition, it would have no profit from its dealings), the national advantage, reſulting from the low price of labour and the deſtruction of paper-credit, would be a ſufficient compenſation. Not to mention, that ſo large a ſum lying ready at command, would be a convenience in times of great public danger and diſtreſs; and what part of it was uſed might be replaced at leiſure, when peace and tranquillity was reſtored to the nation.

But of this ſubject of paper-credit we ſhall treat more largely hereafter. And I ſhall finiſh this eſſay on money, by propoſing and explaining two obſervations, which may, perhaps, ſerve to employ the thoughts of our ſpeculative politicians.

It was a ſhrewd obſervation of ANACHARSIS † the SCYTHIAN, who had never ſeen money in his own country, that gold and ſilver ſeemed to him of no uſe to

* This is the caſe with the bank of AMSTERDAM.

† PLUT. *Quomodo quis ſuos profectus in virtute ſentire poſſit.*

to the GREEKS, but to assist them in numeration and arithmetic. It is indeed evident, that money is nothing but the representation of labour and commodities, and serves only as a method of rating or estimating them. Where coin is in greater plenty, as a greater quantity of it is required to represent the same quantity of goods; it can have no effect, either good or bad, taking a nation within itself, any more than it would make an alteration on a merchant's books, if, instead of the ARABIAN method of notation, which requires few characters, he should make use of the ROMAN, which requires a great many. Nay, the greater quantity of money, like the ROMAN characters, is rather inconvenient, and requires greater trouble both to keep and transport it: But notwithstanding this conclusion, which must be allowed just, it is certain, that, since the discovery of the mines in AMERICA, industry has encreased in all the nations of EUROPE, except in the possessors of those mines; and this may justly be ascribed, amongst other reasons, to the increase of gold and silver. Accordingly we find that, in every kingdom into which money begins to flow in greater abundance than formerly, every thing takes a new face: labour and industry gain life; the merchant becomes more enterprising, the manufacturer more diligent and skilful; and even the farmer follows his plough with greater alacrity and attention. This is not easily to be accounted for, if we consider only the influence which a greater abundance of coin has in the kingdom itself, by heightening the price of commodities, and obliging every one to pay a greater number of these little yellow or white pieces for every thing he purchases: And as to foreign trade, it appears, that great plenty of money is rather disadvantageous, by raising the price of every kind of labour.

To account, then, for this phenomenon, we must consider, that though the high price of commodities be a necessary consequence of the encrease of gold

and silver, yet it follows not immediately upon that encrease; but some time is required before the money circulates through the whole state, and makes its effect be felt on all ranks of people. At first, no alteration is perceived; by degrees the price rises, first of one comodity, then of another; till the whole at last reaches a just proportion with the new quantity of specie which is in the kingdom. In my opinion, it is only in this interval or intermediate situation, between the acquisition of money and rise of prices, that the encreasing quantity of gold and silver is favourable to industry. When any quantity of money is imported into a nation, it is not at first dispersed into many hands; but is confined to the coffers of a few persons, who immediately seek to employ it to advantage. Here are a set of manufacturers or merchants, we shall suppose, who have received returns of gold and silver for goods which they sent to Cadiz. They are thereby enabled to employ more workmen than formerly, who never dream of demanding higher wages, but are glad of employment from such good paymasters. If workmen become scarce, the manufacturer gives higher wages, but at first requires an encrease of labour; and this is willingly submitted to by the artizan, who can now eat and drink better, to compensate his additional toil and fatigue. He carries his money to market, where he finds every thing at the same price as formerly, but returns with greater quantity and of better kinds, for the use of his family. The farmer and gardener, finding that all their commodities are taken off, apply themselves with alacrity to the raising more; and at the same time can afford to take better and more clothes from their tradesmen, whose price is the same as formerly, and their industry only whetted by so much new gain. It is easy to trace the money in its progress through the whole commonwealth; where we shall find, that it must first quicken the diligence of every individual, before it encrease the price of labour.

And

And that the ſpecie may encreaſe to a conſiderable pitch, before it have this latter effect, appears, amongſt other inſtances, from the frequent operations of the FRENCH king on the money, where it was always found, that the augmenting of the numerary value did not produce a proportional riſe of the prices, at leaſt for ſome time. In the laſt year of LOUIS XIV. money was raiſed three-ſevenths, but prices augmented only one. Corn in FRANCE is now ſold at the ſame price, or for the ſame number of livres, it was in 1683; though ſilver was then at 30 livres the mark, and is now at 50*. Not to mention the great addition of gold and ſilver which may have come into that kingdom ſince the former period.

From the whole of this reaſoning, we may conclude, that it is of no manner of conſequence, with regard to the domeſtic happineſs of a ſtate, whether money be in a greater or leſs quantity. The good policy of the magiſtrate conſiſts only in keeping it, if poſſible, ſtill encreaſing; becauſe, by that means, he keeps alive a ſpirit of induſtry in the nation, and encreaſes the ſtock of labour, in which conſiſts all real power and riches. A nation, whoſe money decreaſes, is actually, at that time, weaker and more miſerable than another nation which poſſeſſes no more money, but is on the encreaſing hand. This will be eaſily accounted for, if we conſider, that the alterations in the quantity of money, either on one ſide or the other, are not immediately attended with proportionable alterations in the price of commodities. There is always an interval before matters be adjuſted to their new ſituation; and this interval is as pernicious to induſtry, when gold and ſilver are diminiſhing, as it is advantageous when theſe metals are encreaſing. The workman has not the ſame employment from the manufacturer and merchant; though he pays the ſame price for every thing in the market. The farmer cannot diſpoſe of his corn and cattle; though he muſt pay the ſame rent

* See NOTE [Q].

to his landlord. The poverty, and beggary, and ſloth, which muſt enſue, are eaſily foreſeen.

II. The ſecond obſervation which I propoſed to make with regard to money, may be explained after the following manner: There are ſome kingdoms, and many provinces in EUROPE (and all of them were once in the ſame condition), where money is ſo ſcarce, that the landlord can get none at all from his tenants; but is obliged to take his rent in kind, and either to conſume it himſelf, or tranſport it to places where he may find a market. In thoſe countries, the prince can levy few or no taxes but in the ſame manner: And as he will receive ſmall benefit from impoſitions ſo paid, it is evident that ſuch a kingdom has little force even at home; and cannot maintain fleets and armies to the ſame extent, as if every part of it abounded in gold and ſilver. There is ſurely a greater diſproportion between the force of GERMANY at preſent, and what it was three centuries ago*, than there is in its induſtry, people, and manufactures. The AUSTRIAN dominions in the empire are in general well peopled and well cultivated, and are of great extent; but have not a proportionable weight in the balance of EUROPE; proceeding, as is commonly ſuppoſed, from the ſcarcity of money. How do all theſe facts agree with that principle of reaſon, that the quantity of gold and ſilver is in itſelf altogether indifferent? According to that principle, wherever a ſovereign has numbers of ſubjects, and theſe have plenty of commodities, he ſhould of courſe be great and powerful, and they rich and happy, independent of the greater or leſſer abundance of the precious metals. Theſe admit of diviſions and ſubdiviſions to a great extent; and where the pieces might become ſo ſmall as to be in danger of being loſt, it is eaſy to mix the gold or ſilver with a baſer metal, as is practiſed in ſome countries of EUROPE; and by that means raiſe the

* The ITALIANS gave to the Emperor MAXIMILIAN the nickname of POCCI-DANARI. None of the enterpriſes of that prince ever ſucceeded for want of money.

the pieces to a bulk more ſenſible and convenient. They ſtill ſerve the ſame purpoſes of exchange, whatever their number may be, or whatever colour they may be ſuppoſed to have.

To theſe difficulties I anſwer, that the effect here ſuppoſed to flow from ſcarcity of money, really ariſes from the manners and cuſtoms of the people; and that we miſtake, as is too uſual, a collateral effect for a cauſe. The contradiction is only apparent; but it requires ſome thought and reflection to diſcover the principles, by which we can reconcile *reaſon* to *experience*.

It ſeems a maxim almoſt ſelf evident, that the prices of every thing depend on the proportion between commodities and money, and that any conſiderable alteration on either, has the ſame effect, either of heightening or lowering the price. Encreaſe the commodities, they become cheaper; encreaſe the money, they riſe in their value. As, on the other hand, a diminution of the former, and that of the latter, have contrary tendencies.

It is alſo evident, that the prices do not ſo much depend on the abſolute quantity of commodities and that of money, which are in a nation, as on that of the commodities which come or may come to market, and of the money which circulates. If the coin be locked up in cheſts, it is the ſame thing with regard to prices, as if it were annihilated; if the commodities be hoarded in magazines and granaries, a like effect follows. As the money and commodities, in theſe caſes, never meet, they cannot affect each other. Were we, at any time, to form conjectures concerning the price of proviſions, the corn, which the farmer muſt reſerve for ſeed and for the maintenance of himſelf and family, ought never to enter into the eſtimation. It is only the overplus, compared to the demand, that determines the value.

To apply theſe principles, we muſt conſider, that, in the firſt and more uncultivated ages of any ſtate, ere fancy has confounded her wants with thoſe of na-

ture, men, content with the produce of their own fields, or with thoſe rude improvements which they themſelves can work upon them, have little occaſion for exchange, at leaſt for money, which, by agreement, is the common meaſure of exchange. The wool of the farmer's own flock, ſpun in his own family, and wrought by a neighbouring weaver, who receives his payment in corn or wool, ſuffices for furniture and cloathing. The carpenter, the ſmith, the maſon, the tailor, are retained by wages of a like nature; and the landlord himſelf, dwelling in the neighbourhood, is content to receive his rent in the commodities raiſed by the farmer. The greater part of theſe he conſumes at home in ruſtic hoſpitality: The reſt, perhaps, he diſpoſes of for money to the neighbouring town, whence he draws the few materials of his expence and luxury.

But after men begin to refine on all theſe enjoyments, and live not always at home, nor are content with what can be raiſed in their neighbourhood, there is more exchange and commerce of all kinds, and more money enters into that exchange. The tradeſmen will not be paid in corn; becauſe they want ſomething more than barley to eat. The farmer goes beyond his own pariſh for the commodities he purchaſes, and cannot always carry his commodities to the merchant who ſupplies him. The landlord lives in the capital, or in a foreign country; and demands his rent in gold and ſilver, which can eaſily be tranſported to him. Great undertakers, and manufacturers, and merchants, ariſe in every commodity; and theſe can conveniently deal in nothing but in ſpecie. And conſequently, in this ſituation of ſociety, the coin enters into many more contracts, and by that means is much more employed than in the former.

The neceſſary effect is, that, provided the money encreaſe not in the nation, every thing muſt become much cheaper in times of induſtry and refinement, than in rude, uncultivated ages. It is the proportion between

between the circulating money and the commodities in the market, which determines the prices. Goods that are consumed at home, or exchanged with other goods in the neighbourhood, never come to market; they affect not in the least the current specie; with regard to it they are as if totally annihilated; and consequently this method of using them sinks the proportion on the side of the commodities, and encreases the prices. But after money enters into all contracts and sales, and is every where the measure of exchange, the same national cash has a much greater task to perform; all commodities are then in the market; the sphere of circulation is enlarged; it is the same case, as if that individual sum were to serve a larger kingdom; and therefore, the proportion being here lessened on the side of the money, every thing must become cheaper, and the prices gradually fall.

By the most exact computations, that have been formed all over EUROPE, after making allowance for the alteration in the numerary value or the denomination, it is found, that the prices of all things have only risen three, or, at most, four times, since the discovery of the WEST INDIES. But will any one assert, that there is not much more than four times the coin in EUROPE, that was in the fifteenth century, and the centuries preceding it? The SPANIARDS and PORTUGUESE from their mines, the ENGLISH, FRENCH, and DUTCH, by their AFRICAN trade and by their interlopers in the WEST INDIES, bring home about six millions a year, of which not above a third goes to the EAST INDIES. This sum alone, in ten years, would probably double the ancient stock of money in EUROPE. And no other satisfactory reason can be given, why all prices have not risen to a much more exorbitant height, except that which is derived from a change of customs and manners. Besides that more commodities are produced by additional industry, the same commodities come more to market, after men

depart from their ancient ſimplicity of manners. And though this increaſe has not been equal to that of many, it has, however, been conſiderable, and has preſerved the proportion between coin and commodities nearer the ancient ſtandard.

Were the queſtion propoſed, Which of theſe methods of living in the people, the ſimple or refined, is the moſt advantageous to the ſtate or public? I ſhould, without much ſcruple, prefer the latter, in a view to politics at leaſt; and ſhould produce this as an additional reaſon for the encouragement of trade and manufactures.

While men live in the ancient ſimple manner, and ſupply all their neceſſaries from domeſtic induſtry or from the neighbourhood, the ſovereign can levy no taxes in money from a conſiderable part of his ſubjects; and if he will impoſe on them any burdens, he muſt take payment in commodities, with which alone they abound; a method attended with ſuch great and obvious inconveniences, that they need not here be inſiſted on. All the money he can pretend to raiſe, muſt be from his principal cities, where alone it circulates; and theſe, it is evident, cannot afford him ſo much as the whole ſtate could, did gold and ſilver circulate throughout the whole. But beſides this obvious diminution of the revenue, there is another cauſe of the poverty of the public in ſuch a ſituation. Not only the ſovereign receives leſs money, but the ſame money goes not ſo far as in times of induſtry and general commerce. Every thing is dearer, where the gold and ſilver are ſuppoſed equal; and that becauſe fewer commodities come to market, and the whole coin bears a higher proportion to what is to be purchaſed by it; whence alone the prices of every thing are fixed and determined.

Here then we may learn the fallacy of the remark, often to be met with in hiſtorians, and even in common converſation, that any particular ſtate is weak, though fertile, populous, and well cultivated, merely becauſe

becauſe it wants money. It appears that the want of money can never injure any ſtate within itſelf: For men and commodities are the real ſtrength of any community. It is the ſimple manner of living which here hurts the public, by confining the gold and ſilver to few hands, and preventing its univerſal diffuſion and circulation. On the contrary, induſtry and refinements of all kinds incorporate it with the whole ſtate, however ſmall its quantity may be: They digeſt it into every vein, ſo to ſpeak; and make it enter into every tranſaction and contract. No hand is entirely empty of it. And as the prices of every thing fall by that means, the ſovereign has a double advantage: He may draw money by his taxes from every part of the ſtate; and what he receives, goes farther in every purchaſe and payment.

We may infer, from a compariſon of prices, that money is not more plentiful in CHINA than it was in EUROPE three centuries ago: But what immenſe power is that empire poſſeſſed of, if we may judge by the civil and military eſtabliſhment maintained by it? POLYBIUS* tells us, that proviſions were ſo cheap in ITALY during his time, that in ſome places the ſtated price for a meal at the inn was a *ſemis* a-head, little more than a farthing! Yet the Roman power had even then ſubdued the whole known world. About a century before that period, the CARTHAGINIAN ambaſſador ſaid, by way of raillery, that no people lived more ſociably amongſt themſelves than the ROMANS; for that, in every entertainment, which, as foreign miniſters, they received, they ſtill obſerved the ſame plate at every table†. The abſolute quantity of the precious metals is a matter of great indifference. There are only two circumſtances of any importance, namely, their gradual increaſe, and their thorough concoction and circulation through the ſtate; and the influence of both thoſe circumſtances has here been explained.

* Lib. ii. cap. 15. † PLIN. lib. xxxiii. cap. 11.

In the following Eſſay we ſhall ſee an inſtance of a like fallacy as that above mentioned; where a collateral effect is taken for a cauſe, and where a conſequence is aſcribed to the plenty of money; though it be really owing to a change in the manners and cuſtoms of the people.

ESSAY IV.

OF INTEREST.

NOTHING is eſteemed a more certain ſign of the flouriſhing condition of any nation than the lowneſs of intereſt: And with reaſon; though I believe the cauſe is ſomewhat different from what is commonly apprehended. Lowneſs of intereſt is generally aſcribed to plenty of money. But money, however plentiful, has no other effect, *if fixed*, than to raiſe the price of labour. Silver is more common than gold, and therefore you receive a greater quantity of it for the ſame commodities. But do you pay leſs intereſt for it? Intereſt in BATAVIA and JAMAICA is at 10 *per cent.* in PORTUGAL at 6; though theſe places, as we may learn from the prices of every thing, abound more in gold and ſilver than either LONDON or AMSTERDAM.

Were all the gold in ENGLAND annihilated at once, and one and twenty ſhillings ſubſtituted in the place of every guinea, would money be more plentiful or intereſt lower? No ſurely: We ſhould only uſe ſilver inſtead of gold. Were gold rendered as common as ſilver, and ſilver as common as copper; would money be more plentiful or intereſt lower? We may aſſuredly

assuredly give the same answer. Our shillings would then be yellow, and our halfpence white; and we should have no guineas. No other difference would ever be observed; no alteration on commerce, manufactures, navigation, or interest; unless we imagine, that the colour of the metal is of any consequence.

Now, what is so visible in these greater variations of scarcity or abundance in the precious metals, must hold in all inferior changes. If the multiplying of gold and silver fifteen times makes no difference, much less can the doubling or tripling them. All augmentation has no other effect than to heighten the price of labour and commodities; and even this variation is little more than that of a name. In the progress towards these changes, the augmentation may have some influence, by exciting industry; but after the prices are settled, suitably to the new abundance of gold and silver, it has no manner of influence.

An effect always holds proportion with its cause. Prices have risen near four times since the discovery of the INDIES; and it is probable gold and silver have multiplied much more: But interest has not fallen much above half. The rate of interest, therefore, is not derived from the quantity of the precious metals.

Money having chiefly a fictitious value, the greater or less plenty of it is of no consequence, if we consider a nation within itself; and the quantity of specie, when once fixed, though ever so large, has no other effect, than to oblige every one to tell out a greater number of those shining bits of metal, for clothes, furniture, or equipage, without encreasing any one convenience of life. If a man borrow money to build a house, he then carries home a greater load; because the stone, timber, lead, glass, &c. with the labour of the masons and carpenters, are represented by a greater quantity of gold and silver. But as these metals are considered chiefly as representations, there can no alteration arise, from their bulk or quantity,

quantity, their weight or colour, either upon their real value or their intereſt. The ſame intereſt, in all caſes, bears the ſame proportion to the ſum. And if you lent me ſo much labour and ſo many commodities, by receiving five *per cent.* you always receive proportional labour and commodities, however repreſented, whether by yellow or white coin, whether by a pound or an ounce. It is in vain, therefore, to look for the cauſe of the fall or riſe of intereſt in the greater or leſs quantity of gold and ſilver, which is fixed in any nation.

High intereſt ariſes from *three* circumſtances: A great demand for borrowing; little riches to ſupply that demand; and great profits ariſing from commerce: And theſe circumſtances are a clear proof of the ſmall advance of commerce and induſtry, not of the ſcarcity of gold and ſilver. Low intereſt, on the other hand, proceeds from the three oppoſite circumſtances: A ſmall demand for borrowing; great riches to ſupply that demand, and ſmall profits ariſing from commerce. And theſe circumſtances are all connected together, and proceed from the encreaſe of induſtry and commerce, not of gold and ſilver. We ſhall endeavour to prove theſe points; and ſhall begin with the cauſes and the effects of a great or ſmall demand for borrowing.

When a people have emerged ever ſo little from a ſavage ſtate, and their numbers have encreaſed beyond the original multitude, there muſt immediately ariſe an inequality of property; and while ſome poſſeſs large tracts of land, others are confined within narrow limits, and ſome are entirely without any landed property. Thoſe who poſſeſs more land than they can labour, employ thoſe who poſſeſs none, and agree to receive a determined part of the product. Thus the *landed* intereſt is immediatly eſtabliſhed; nor is there any ſettled government, however rude, in which affairs are not on this footing. Of theſe proprietors of land, ſome muſt preſently diſcover

themſelves to be of different tempers from others; and while one would willingly ſtore up the produce of his land for futurity, another deſires to conſume at preſent what ſhould ſuffice for many years. But as the ſpending of a ſettled revenue is a way of life entirely without occupation; men have ſo much need of ſomewhat to fix and engage them, that pleaſures, ſuch as they are, will be the purſuit of the greater part of the landholders, and the prodigals among them will always be more numerous than the miſers. In a ſtate, therefore, where there is nothing but a landed intereſt, as there is little frugality, the borrowers muſt be very numerous, and the rate of intereſt muſt hold proportion to it. The difference depends not on the quantity of money, but on the habits and manners which prevail. By this alone the demand for borrowing is encreaſed or diminiſhed. Were money ſo plentiful as to make an egg be ſold for ſixpence; ſo long as there are only landed gentry and peaſants in the ſtate, the borrowers muſt be numerous, and intereſt high. The rent for the ſame farm would be heavier and more bulky: But the ſame idleneſs of the landlord, with the higher price of commodities, would diſſipate it in the ſame time, and produce the ſame neceſſity and demand for borrowing.

Nor is the caſe different with regard to the *ſecond* circumſtance which we propoſed to conſider, namely, the great or little riches to ſupply the demand. This effect alſo depends on the habits and way of living of the people, not on the quantity of gold and ſilver. In order to have, in any ſtate, a greater number of lenders, it is not ſufficient nor requiſite, that there be great abundance of the precious metals. It is only requiſite, that the property or command of that quantity, which is in the ſtate, whether great or ſmall, ſhould be collected in particular hands, ſo as to form conſiderable ſums, or compoſe a great monied intereſt. This begets a number of lenders, and ſinks the

rate

rate of uſury; and this, I ſhall venture to affirm, depends not on the quantity of ſpecie, but on particular manners and cuſtoms, which make the ſpecie gather into ſeperate ſums or maſſes of confiderable value.

For ſuppoſe, that, by miracle, every man in GREAT BRITAIN ſhould have five pounds ſlipt into his pocket in one night; this would much more than double the whole money that is at preſent in the kingdom: yet there would not next day, nor for ſome time, be any more lenders, nor any variation in the intereſt. And were there nothing but landlords and peaſants in the ſtate, this money, however abundant, could never gather into ſums; and would only ſerve to encreaſe the prices of every thing, without any farther conſequence. The prodigal landlord diſſipates it, as faſt as he receives it; and the beggarly peaſant has no means, nor view, nor ambition, of obtaining above a bare livelihood. The overplus of borrowers above that of lenders continuing ſtill the ſame, there will follow no reduction of intereſt. That depends upon another principle; and muſt proceed from an encreaſe of induſtry and frugality, of arts and commerce.

Every thing uſeful to the life of man ariſes from the ground; but few things ariſe in that condition which is requiſite to render them uſeful. There muſt, therefore, beſide the peaſants and the proprietors of land, be another rank of men, who, receiving from the former the rude materials, work them into their proper form, and retain part for their own uſe and ſubſiſtence. In the infancy of ſociety, theſe contracts between the artiſans and the peaſants, and between one ſpecies of artiſans and another, are commonly entered into immediately by the perſons themſelves, who, being neighbours, are eaſily acquainted with each other's neceſſities, and can lend their mutual aſſiſtance to ſupply them. But when mens induſtry encreaſes, and their views enlarge, it is found that the moſt remote parts of the ſtate can aſſiſt each other as well as the more contiguous, and

that this intercourſe of good offices may be carried on to the greateſt extent and intricacy. Hence the origin of *merchants*, one of the moſt uſeful races of men, who ſerve as agents between thoſe parts of the ſtate, that are wholly unacquainted, and are ignorant of each other's neceſſities. Here are in a city fifty workmen in ſilk and linen, and a thouſand cuſtomers; and theſe two ranks of men, ſo neceſſary to each other, can never rightly meet, till one man erects a ſhop, to which all the workmen and all the cuſtomers repair. In this province graſs riſes in abundance: The inhabitants abound in cheeſe, and butter, and cattle; but want bread and corn, which in a neighbouring province are in too great abundance for the uſe of the inhabitants. One man diſcovers this. He brings corn from the one province, and returns with cattle; and, ſupplying the wants of both, he is, ſo far, a common benefactor. As the people encreaſe in numbers and induſtry, the difficulty of their intercourſe encreaſes: The buſineſs of the agency or merchandize becomes more intricate; and divides, ſubdivides, compounds, and mixes to a greater variety. In all theſe tranſactions, it is neceſſary and reaſonable, that a conſiderable part of the commodities and labour ſhould belong to the merchant, to whom, in a great meaſure, they are owing. And theſe commodities he will ſometimes preſerve in kind, or more commonly convert into money, which is their common repreſentation. If gold and ſilver have encreaſed in the ſtate together with the induſtry, it will require a great quantity of theſe metals to repreſent a great quantity of commodities and labour. If induſtry alone has encreaſed, the prices of every thing muſt ſink, and a ſmall quantity of ſpecie will ſerve as a repreſentation.

There is no craving or demand of the human mind more conſtant and inſatiable than that for exerciſe and employment; and this deſire ſeems the foundation of moſt of our paſſions and purſuits. Deprive a man

man of all buſineſs and ſerious occupation, he runs reſtleſs from one amuſement to another; and the weight and oppreſſion which he feels from idleneſs, is ſo great, that he forgets the ruin which muſt follow him from his immoderate expences. Give him a more harmleſs way of employing his mind or body, he is ſatisfied, and feels no longer that inſatiable thirſt after pleaſure. But if the employment you give him be lucrative, eſpecially if the profit be attached to every particular exertion of induſtry, he has gain ſo often in his eye, that he acquires, by degrees, a paſſion for it, and knows no ſuch pleaſure as that of ſeeing the daily increaſe of his fortune. And this is the reaſon why trade encreaſes frugality, and why, among merchants, there is the ſame overplus of miſers above prodigals, as, among the poſſeſſers of land, there is the contrary.

Commerce encreaſes induſtry, by conveying it readily from one member of the ſtate to another, and allowing none of it to periſh or become uſeleſs. It encreaſes frugality, by giving occupation to men, and employing them in the arts of gain; which ſoon engage their affection, and remove all reliſh for pleaſure and expence. It is an infallible conſequence of all induſtrious profeſſions, to beget frugality, and make the love of gain prevail over the love of pleaſure. Among lawyers and phyſicians who have any practice, there are many more who live within their income, than who exceed it, or even live up to it. But lawyers and phyſicians beget no induſtry; and it is even at the expence of others they acquire their riches; ſo that they are ſure to diminiſh the poſſeſſions of ſome of their fellow-citizens, as faſt as they encreaſe their own. Merchants, on the contrary, beget induſtry, by ſerving as canals to convey it through every corner of the ſtate: And at the ſame time, by their frugality, they acquire great power over that induſtry, and collect a large property in the labour and commodities, which they are the chief inſtruments

inſtruments in producing. There is no other profeſſion, therefore, except merchandize, which can make the monied intereſt conſiderable, or, in other words, can encreaſe induſtry, and, by alſo encreaſing frugality, give a great demand of that induſtry to particular members of the ſociety. Without commerce, the ſtate muſt conſiſt chiefly of landed gentry, whoſe prodigality and expence make a continual demand for borrowing; and of peaſants, who have no ſums to ſupply that demand. The money never gathers into large ſtocks or ſums, which can be lent at intereſt. It is diſperſed into numberleſs hands, who either ſquander it in idle ſhow and magnificence, or employ it in the purchaſe of the common neceſſaries of life. Commerce alone aſſembles it into conſiderable ſums; and this effect it has merely from the induſtry which it begets, and the frugality which it inſpires, independent of that particular quantity of precious metal which may circulate in the ſtate.

Thus an increaſe of commerce, by an eceſſary conſequence, raiſes a great number of lenders, and by that means produces lowneſs of intereſt. We muſt now conſider how far this encreaſe of commerce diminiſhes the profits ariſing from that profeſſion, and gives riſe to the *third* circumſtance requiſite to produce lowneſs of intereſt.

It may be proper to obſerve on this head, that low intereſt and low profits of merchandize, are two events that mutually forward each other, and are both originally derived from that extenſive commerce which produces opulent merchants, and renders the monied intereſt conſiderable. Where merchants poſſeſs great ſtocks, whether repreſented by few or many pieces of metal, it muſt frequently happen, that, when they either become tired of buſineſs, or leave heirs unwilling or unfit to engage in commerce, a great proportion of theſe riches naturally ſeeks an annual and ſecure revenue. The plenty diminiſhes the price, and makes the lenders accept of a low intereſt. This

conſideration obliges many to keep their ſtock employed in trade, and rather be content with low profits, than diſpoſe of their money at an undervalue. On the other hand, when commerce has become extenſive, and employs large ſtocks, there muſt ariſe rivalſhips among the merchants, which diminiſh the profits of trade, at the ſame time that they encreaſe the trade itſelf. The low profits of merchandize induce the merchants to accept more willingly of a low intereſt, when they leave off buſineſs, and begin to indulge themſelves in eaſe and indolence. It is needleſs, therefore, to inquire which of theſe circumſtances, to wit, *low intereſt* or *low profits*, is the cauſe, and which the effect. They both ariſe from an extenſive commerce, and mutually forward each other. No man will accept of low profits, where he can have high intereſt; and no man will accept of low intereſt, where he can have high profits. An extenſive commerce, by producing large ſtocks, diminiſhes both intereſt and profits; and is always aſſiſted in its diminution of the one by the proportional ſinking of the other. I may add, that, as low profits ariſe from the encreaſe of commerce and induſtry, they ſerve in their turn to its farther encreaſe, by rendering the commodities cheaper, encouraging the conſumption, and heightening the induſtry. And thus, if we conſider the whole connection of cauſes and effects, intereſt is the barometer of the ſtate, and its lowneſs is a ſign almoſt infallible of the flouriſhing condition of a people. It proves the encreaſe of induſtry, and its prompt circulation through the whole ſtate, little inferior to a demonſtration. And though, perhaps, it may not be impoſſible but a ſudden and a great check to commerce may have a momentary effect of the ſame kind, by throwing ſo many ſtocks out of trade; it muſt be attended with ſuch miſery and want of employment in the poor, that, beſides its ſhort duration, it will not be poſſible to miſtake the one caſe for the other.

Thoſe

Thoſe who have aſſerted, that the plenty of money was the cauſe of low intereſt, ſeem to have taken a collateral effect for a cauſe; ſince the ſame induſtry which ſinks the intereſt, commonly acquires great abundance of the precious metals. A variety of fine manufactures, with vigilant enterprizing merchants, will ſoon draw money to a ſtate, if it be any where to be found in the world. The ſame cauſe, by multiplying the conveniences of life, and encreaſing induſtry, collects great riches into the hands of perſons, who are not proprietors of land, and produces by that means a lowneſs of intereſt: But though both theſe effects, plenty of money and low intereſt, naturally ariſe from commerce and induſtry, they are altogether independent of each other. For ſuppoſe a nation removed into the *Pacific* ocean, without any foreign commerce, or any knowledge of navigation; ſuppoſe, that this nation poſſeſſes always the ſame ſtock of coin, but is continually encreaſing in its numbers and induſtry: It is evident, that the price of every commodity muſt gradually diminiſh in that kingdom; ſince it is the proportion between money and any ſpecies of goods which fixes their mutual value; and upon the preſent ſuppoſition, the conveniences of life become every day more abundant, without any alteration in the current ſpecie. A leſs quantity of money, therefore, among this people, will make a rich man, during the times of induſtry, than would ſuffice to that purpoſe in ignorant and ſlothful ages. Leſs money will build a houſe, portion a daughter, buy an eſtate, ſupport a manufactory, or maintain a family and equipage. Theſe are the uſes for which men borrow money; and therefore, the greater or leſs quantity of it in a ſtate has no influence on the intereſt: But it is evident, that the greater or leſs ſtock of labour and commodities muſt have a great influence; ſince we really and in effect borrow theſe when we take money upon intereſt. It is true, when commerce is extended all over the globe, the

moſt induſtrious nations always abound moſt with the precious metals: So that low intereſt and plenty of money are in fact almoſt inſeperable. But ſtill it is of conſequence to know the principle whence any phenomenon ariſes, and to diſtinguiſh between a cauſe and a concomitant effect. Beſides that the ſpeculation is curious, it may frequently be of uſe in the conduct of public affairs. At leaſt, it muſt be owned, that nothing can be of more uſe than to improve, by practice, the method of reaſoning on theſe ſubjects, which of all others are the moſt important; though they are commonly treated in the looſeſt and moſt careleſs manner.

Another reaſon of this popular miſtake with regard to the cauſe of low intereſt, ſeems to be the inſtance of ſome nations; where, after a ſudden acquiſition of money or of the precious metals, by means of foreign conqueſt, the intereſt has fallen, not only among them, but in all the neighbouring ſtates, as ſoon as that money was diſperſed, and had inſinuated itſelf into every corner. Thus, intereſt in SPAIN fell near half immediately after the diſcovery of the WEST INDIES, as we are informed by GARCILASSO DE LA VEGA: And it has been ever ſince gradually ſinking in every kingdom of EUROPE. Intereſt in ROME, after the conqueſt of EGYPT, fell from 6 to 4 *per cent.* as we learn from DION*.

The cauſes of the ſinking of intereſt, upon ſuch an event, ſeem different in the conquering country and in the neighbouring ſtates; but in neither of them can we juſtly aſcribe that effect merely to the encreaſe of gold and ſilver.

In the conquering country, it is natural to imagine, that this new acquiſition of money will fall into a few hands, and be gathered into large ſums, which ſeek a ſecure revenue, either by the purchaſe of land, or by intereſt; and conſequently the ſame effect follows, for a litte time, as if there had been a great acceſſion of

* Lib. ii.

of induſtry and commerce. The encreaſe of lenders above the borrowers ſinks the intereſt; and ſo much the faſter, if thoſe, who have acquired thoſe large ſums, find no induſtry or commerce in the ſtate, and no method of employing their money but by lending it at intereſt. But after this new maſs of gold and ſilver has been digeſted, and has circulated through the whole ſtate, affairs will ſoon return to their former ſituation; while the landlords and new money-holders, living idly, ſquander above their income; and the former daily contract debt, and the latter encroach on their ſtock till its final extinction. The whole money may ſtill be in the ſtate, and make itſelf felt by the encreaſe of prices: But not being now collected into any large maſſes or ſtocks, the diſproportion between the borrowers and lenders is the ſame as formerly, and conſequently the high intereſt returns.

Accordingly we find, in ROME, that ſo early as TIBERIUS's time, intereſt had again mounted to 6* *per cent.* though no accident had happened to drain the empire of money. In TRAJAN's time, money lent on mortgages in ITALY bore 6 *per cent*†; on common ſecurities in BITHYNIA, 12‡. And if intereſt in SPAIN has not riſen to its old pitch, this can be aſcribed to nothing but the continuance of the ſame cauſe that ſunk it, to wit, the large fortunes continually made in the INDIES, which come over to SPAIN from time to time, and ſupply the demand of the borrowers. By this accidental and extraneous cauſe, more money is to be lent in SPAIN, that is, more money is collected into large ſums, than would otherwiſe be found in a ſtate, where there are ſo little commerce and induſtry.

As to the reduction of intereſt, which has followed in ENGLAND, FRANCE, and other kingdoms of EU-

* COLUMELLA, lib. iii. cap. 3.
† PLINII epiſt. lib. vii. ep. 18.
‡ Id. lib. x. ep. 62.

ROPE, that have no mines, it has been gradual; and has not proceeded from the encreaſe of money, conſidered merely in itſelf; but from that of induſtry, which is the natural effect of the former encreaſe, in that interval, before it raiſes the price of labour and proviſions. For to return to the foregoing ſuppoſition: if the induſtry of ENGLAND had riſen as much from other cauſes (and that riſe might eaſily have happened, though the ſtock of money had remained the ſame), muſt not all the ſame conſequences have followed which we obſerve at preſent? The ſame people would, in that caſe, be found in the kingdom, the ſame commodities, the ſame induſtry, manufactures, and commerce; and conſequently, the ſame merchants with the ſame ſtocks, that is, with the ſame command over labour and commodities, only repreſented by a ſmaller number of white or yellow pieces, which being a circumſtance of no moment, would only affect the waggoner, porter, and trunk-maker. Luxury, therefore, manufactures, arts, induſtry, frugality, flouriſhing equally as at preſent, it is evident, that intereſt muſt alſo have been as low; ſince that is the neceſſary reſult of all theſe circumſtances; ſo far as they determine the profits of commerce, and the proportion between the borrowers and lenders in any ſtate.

ESSAY V.

Of the BALANCE of TRADE.

IT is very uſual, in nations ignorant of the nature of commerce, to prohibit the exportation of commodities, and to preſerve among themſelves whatever they

they think valuable and useful. They do not consider, that, in this prohibition, they act directly contrary to their intention; and that the more is exported of any commodity, the more will be raised at home, of which they themselves will always have the first offer.

It is well known to the learned, that the ancient laws of ATHENS rendered the exportation of figs criminal; that being supposed a species of fruit so excellent in ATTICA, that the ATHENIANS deemed it too delicious for the palate of any foreigner. And in this ridiculous prohibition they were so much in earnest, that informers were thence called *sycophants* among them, from two GREEK words which signify *figs* and *discoverer**. There are proofs in many old acts of parliament of the same ignorance in the nature of commerce, particularly in the reign of EDWARD III. And to this day, in FRANCE, the exportation of corn is almost always prohibited; in order, as they say, to prevent famines; though it is evident, that nothing contributes more to the frequent famines which so much distress that fertile country.

The same jealous fear, with regard to money, has also prevailed among several nations; and it required both reason and experience to convince any people, that these prohibitions serve to no other purpose than to raise the exchange against them, and produce a still greater exportation.

These errors, one may say, are gross and palpable: But there still prevails, even in nations well acquainted with commerce, a strong jealousy with regard to the balance of trade, and a fear, that all their gold and silver may be leaving them. This seems to me, almost in every case, a groundless apprehension; and I should as soon dread, that all our springs and rivers should be exhausted, as that money should abandon a kingdom where there are people and industry.

* PLUT. *De Curiositate.*

Let us carefully preſerve theſe latter advantages; and we need never be apprehenſive of loſing the former.

It is eaſy to obſerve, that all calculations concerning the balance of trade are founded on very uncertain facts and ſuppoſitions. The cuſtom-houſe books are allowed to be an inſufficient ground of reaſoning; nor is the rate of exchange much better, unleſs we conſider it with all nations, and know alſo the proportions of the ſeveral ſums remitted; which one may ſafely pronounce impoſſible. Every man, who has ever reaſoned on this ſubject, has always proved his theory, whatever it was, by facts and calculations, and by an enumeration of all the commodities ſent to all foreign kingdoms.

The writings of Mr. Gee ſtruck the nation with an univerſal panic, when they ſaw it plainly demonſtrated, by a detail of particulars, that the balance was againſt them for ſo conſiderable a ſum as muſt leave them without a ſingle ſhilling in five or ſix years. But, luckily, twenty years have ſince elapſed, with an expenſive foreign war; yet it is commonly ſuppoſed, that money is ſtill more plentiful among us than in any former period.

Nothing can be more entertaining on this head than Dr. SWIFT; an author ſo quick in diſcerning the miſtakes and abſurdities of others. He ſays, in his *Short View of the State of* IRELAND, that the whole caſh of that kingdom formerly amounted but to 500,000*l.*; that out of this the IRISH remitted every year a neat million to ENGLAND, and had ſcarcely any other ſource from which they could compenſate themſelves, and little other foreign trade than the importation of FRENCH wines, for which they paid ready money. The conſequence of this ſituation, which muſt be owned to be diſadvantageous, was, that, in a courſe of three years, the current money of IRELAND, from 500,000*l.* was reduced to leſs than two. And at preſent, I ſuppoſe, in a courſe

of

of 30 years, it is abſolutely nothing. Yet I know not how that opinion of the advance of riches in IRELAND, which gave the Doctor ſo much indignation, ſeems ſtill to continue, and gain ground with every body.

In ſhort, this apprehenſion of the wrong balance of trade, appears of ſuch a nature, that it diſcovers itſelf, wherever one is out of humour with the miniſtry, or is in low ſpirits; and as it can never be refuted by a particular detail of all the exports, which counterbalance the imports, it may here be proper to form a general argument, that may prove the impoſſibility of this event, as long as we preſerve our people and our induſtry.

Suppoſe four-fifths of all the money in GREAT BRITAIN to be annihilated in one night, and the nation reduced to the ſame condition, with regard to ſpecie, as in the reigns of the HARRYS and EDWARDS, what would be the conſequence? Muſt not the price of all labour and commodities ſink in proportion, and every thing be ſold as cheap as they were in thoſe ages? What nation could then diſpute with us in any foreign market, or pretend to navigate or to ſell manufactures at the ſame price, which to us would afford ſufficient profit? In how little time, therefore, muſt this bring back the money which we had loſt, and raiſe us to the level of all the neighbouring nations? Where, after we have arrived, we immediately loſe the advantage of the cheapneſs of labour and commodities; and the farther flowing in of money is ſtopped by our fulneſs and repletion.

Again, ſuppoſe, that all the money of GREAT BRITAIN were multiplied fivefold in a night, muſt not the contrary effect follow? Muſt not all labour and commodities riſe to ſuch an exorbitant height, that no neighbouring nations could afford to buy from us; while their commodities, on the other hand, became comparatively ſo cheap, that, in ſpite of all the laws which could be formed, they would be run in upon

us,

us, and our money flow out; till we fall to a level with foreigners, and lose that great superiority of riches, which had laid us under such disadvantages?

Now, it is evident, that the same causes, which would correct these exorbitant inequalities, were they to happen miraculously, must prevent their happening in the common course of nature, and must for ever, in all neighbouring nations, preserve money nearly proportionable to the art and industry of each nation. All water, wherever it communicates, remains always at a level. Ask naturalists the reason; they tell you, that, were it to be raised in any one place, the superior gravity of that part not being balanced must depress it, till it meet a counterpoise; and that the same cause, which redresses the inequality when it happens, must for ever prevent it, without some violent external operation*.

Can one imagine, that it had ever been possible, by any laws, or even by any art or industry, to have kept all the money in SPAIN, which the galleons brought from the INDIES? Or that all commodities could be sold in FRANCE for a tenth of the price which they would yield on the other side of the PYRENEES, without finding their way thither, and draining from that immense treasure? What other reason, indeed, is there, why all nations, at present, gain in their trade with SPAIN and PORTUGAL; but because it is impossible to heap up money, more than any fluid, beyond its proper level? The sovereigns of these countries have shown, that they wanted not inclination to keep their gold and silver to themselves, had it been in any degree practicable.

But

* There is another cause, though more limited in its operation, which checks the wrong balance of trade, to every particular nation to which the kingdom trades. When we import more goods than we export, the exchange turns against us, and this becomes a new encouragement to export; as much as the charge of carriage and insurance of the money which becomes due would amount to. For the exchange can never rise but a little higher than that sum.

But as any body of water may be raiſed above the level of the ſurrounding element, if the former has no communication with the latter; ſo in money, if the communication be cut off, by any material or phyſical impediment (for all laws alone are ineffectual), there may, in ſuch a caſe, be a very great inequality of money. Thus the immenſe diſtance of CHINA, together with the monopolies of our INDIA companies, obſtructing the communication, preſerve in EUROPE the gold and ſilver, eſpecially the latter, in much greater plenty than they are found in that kingdom. But, notwithſtanding this great obſtruction, the force of the cauſes above mentioned is ſtill evident. The ſkill and ingenuity of EUROPE in general ſurpaſſes perhaps that of CHINA, with regard to manual arts and manufactures: yet are we never able to trade thither without great diſadvantage. And were it not for the continual recruits which we receive from AMERICA, money would ſoon ſink in EUROPE, and riſe in CHINA, till it came nearly to a level in both places. Nor can any reaſonable man doubt, but that induſtrious nation, were they as near us as POLAND or BARBARY, would drain us of the overplus of our ſpecie, and draw to themſelves a larger ſhare of the WEST INDIAN treaſures. We need not have recourſe to a phyſical attraction, in order to explain the neceſſity of this operation. There is a moral attraction, ariſing from the intereſts and paſſions of men, which is full as potent and infallible.

How is the balance kept in the provinces of every kingdom among themſelves, but by the force of this principle, which makes it impoſſible for money to loſe its level, and either to riſe or ſink beyond the proportion of the labour and commodities which are in each province? Did not long experience make people eaſy on this head, what a fund of gloomy reflections might calculations afford to a melancholy YORKSHIREMAN, while he computed and magnified the

the ſums drawn to LONDON by taxes, abſentees, commodities, and found on compariſon the oppoſite articles ſo much inferior? And no doubt, had the *Heptarchy* ſubſiſted in ENGLAND, the legiſlature of each ſtate had been continually alarmed by the fear of a wrong balance; and as it is probable that the mutual hatred of theſe ſtates would have been extremely violent on account of their cloſe neighbourhood, they would have loaded and oppreſſed all commerce, by a jealous and ſuperfluous caution. Since the Union has removed the barriers between SCOTLAND and ENGLAND, which of theſe nations gains from the other by this free commerce? Or if the former kingdom has received any encreaſe of riches, can it reaſonably be accounted for by any thing but the encreaſe of its art and induſtry? It was a common apprehenſion in ENGLAND, before the Union, as we learn from L'ABBE DU BOS *, that SCOTLAND would ſoon drain them of their treaſure, were an open trade allowed; and on the other ſide the TWEED a contrary apprehenſion prevailed: With what juſtice in both, time has ſhown.

What happens in ſmall portions of mankind, muſt take place in greater. The provinces of the ROMAN empire, no doubt, kept their balance with each other, and with ITALY, independent of the legiſlature; as much as the ſeveral counties of GREAT BRITAIN, or the ſeveral pariſhes of each county. And any man who travels over EUROPE at this day, may ſee, by the prices of commodities, that money, in ſpite of the abſurd jealouſy of princes and ſtates, has brought itſelf nearly to a level; and that the difference between one kingdom and another is not greater in this reſpect, than it is often between different provinces of the ſame kingdom. Men naturally flock to capital cities, ſea-ports, and navigable rivers. There we find more men, more induſtry, more commodities, and conſequently more money; but ſtill the latter difference.

* *Les interets d'* ANGLETERRE *mal-entendus.*

difference holds proportion with the former, and the level is preſerved*.

Our jealouſy and our hatred of FRANCE are without bounds: and the former ſentiment, at leaſt, muſt be acknowledged reaſonable and well grounded. Theſe paſſions have occaſioned innumerable barriers and obſtructions upon commerce, where we are accuſed of being commonly the aggreſſors. But what have we gained by the bargain? We loſt the FRENCH market for our woollen manufactures, and transferred the commerce of wine to SPAIN and PORTUGAL, where we buy worſe liquor at a higher price. There are few ENGLISHMEN who would not think their country abſolutely ruined, were FRENCH wines ſold in ENGLAND ſo cheap and in ſuch abundance as to ſupplant, in ſome meaſure, all ale and home-brewed liquors: But would we lay aſide prejudice, it would not be difficult to prove, that nothing could be more innocent, perhaps advantageous. Each new acre of vineyard planted in FRANCE, in order to ſupply ENGLAND with wine, would make it requiſite for the FRENCH to take the produce of an ENGLISH acre, ſown in wheat or barley, in order to ſubſiſt themſelves; and it is evident, that we ſhould thereby get command of the better commodity.

There are many edicts of the FRENCH king, prohibiting the planting of new vineyards, and ordering all thoſe which are lately planted to be grubbed up: So ſenſible are they, in that country, of the ſuperior value of corn above every other product.

Mareſchal VAUBAN complains often, and with reaſon, of the abſurd duties which load the entry of thoſe wines of LANGUEDOC, GUIENNE, and other ſouthern provinces, that are imported into BRITANNY and NORMANDY. He entertained no doubt but theſe latter provinces could preſerve their balance, notwithſtanding the open commerce which he recommends. And it is evident, that a few leagues more

* See NOTE [R].

more navigation to ENGLAND would make no difference; or if it did, that it must operate alike on the commodities of both kingdoms.

There is indeed one expedient by which it is possible to sink, and another by which we may raise, money beyond its natural level in any kingdom; but these cases, when examined, will be found to resolve into our general theory, and to bring additional authority to it.

I scarcely know any method of sinking money below its level, but those institutions of banks, funds, and paper-credit, which are so much practised in this kingdom. These render paper equivalent to money, circulate it throughout the whole state, make it supply the place of gold and silver, raise proportionably the price of labour and commodities, and by that means either banish a great part of those precious metals, or prevent their farther encrease. What can be more short-sighted than our reasonings on this head? We fancy, because an individual would be much richer, were his stock of money doubled, that the same good effect would follow were the money of every one encreased; not considering that this would raise as much the price of every commodity, and reduce every man in time to the same condition as before. It is only in our public negociations and transactions with foreigners, that a greater stock of money is advantageous; and as our paper is there absolutely insignificant, we feel, by its means, all the ill effects arising from a great abundance of money, without reaping any of the advantages*.

Suppose that there are 12 millions of paper which circulate in the kingdom as money (for we are not to imagine that all our enormous funds are employed

* We observed in Essay III. that money, when encreasing, gives encouragement to industry, during the interval between the encrease of money and rise of the prices. A good effect of this nature may follow too from paper-credit; but it is dangerous to precipitate matters, at the risk of losing all by the failing of that credit, as must happen upon any violent shock in public affairs.

ed in that ſhape), and ſuppoſe the real caſh of the kingdom to be 18 millions: Here is a ſtate which is found by experience to be able to hold a ſtock of 30 millions. I ſay, if it be able to hold it, it muſt of neceſſity have acquired it in gold and ſilver, had we not obſtructed the entrance of theſe metals by this new invention of paper. *Whence would it have acquired that ſum?* From all the kingdoms of the world. *But why?* Becauſe, if you remove theſe 12 millions, money in this ſtate is below its level, compared with our neighbours; and we muſt immediately draw from all of them, till we be full and ſaterate, ſo to ſpeak, and can hold no more. By our preſent politics we are are as careful to ſtuff the nation with this fine commodity of bank-bills and chequer-notes, as if we were afraid of being overburthened with the precious metals.

It is not to be doubted, but the great plenty of bullion in FRANCE, is in a great meaſure owing to the want of paper-credit. The FRENCH have no banks: Merchants bills do not there circulate as with us: Uſury or lending on intereſt is not directly permitted; ſo that many have large ſums in their coffers: Great quantities of plate are uſed in private houſes; and all the churches are full of it. By this means, proviſions and labour ſtill remain cheaper among them, than in nations that are not half ſo rich in gold and ſilver. The advantages of this ſituation, in point of trade as well as in great public emergencies, are too evident to be diſputed.

The ſame faſhion a few years ago prevailed in GENOA, which ſtill has place in ENGLAND and HOLLAND, of uſing ſervices of CHINA-ware inſtead of plate; but the ſenate, forſeeing the conſequence, prohibited the uſe of that brittle commodity beyond a certain extent; while the uſe of ſilver-plate was left unlimited. And I ſuppoſe, in their late diſtreſſes, they felt the good effect of this ordinance. Our tax on plate is, perhaps, in this view, ſomewhat impolitic.

Before

Before the introduction of paper-money into our colonies, they had gold and ſilver ſufficient for their circulation. Since the introduction of that commodity, the leaſt inconveniency that has followed is the total baniſhment of the precious metals. And after the abolition of paper, can it be doubted but money will return, while theſe colonies poſſeſs manufactures and commodities, the only thing valuable in commerce, and for whoſe ſake alone all men deſire money?

What pity LYCURGUS did not think of paper-credit, when he wanted to baniſh gold and ſilver from SPARTA! It would have ſerved his purpoſe better than the lumps of iron he made uſe of as money; and would alſo have prevented more effectually all commerce with ſtrangers, as being of ſo much leſs real and intrinſic value.

It muſt, however, be confeſſed, that, as all theſe queſtions of trade and money are extremely complicated, there are certain lights in which this ſubject may be placed, ſo as to repreſent the advantages of paper-credit and banks to be ſuperior to their diſadvantages. That they baniſh ſpecie and bullion from a ſtate is undoubtedly true; and whoever looks no farther than this circumſtance does well to condemn them; but ſpecie and bullion are not of ſo great conſequence as not to admit of a compenſation, and even an overbalance, from the encreaſe of induſtry and of credit, which may be promoted by the right uſe of paper-money. It is well known of what advantage it is to a merchant to be able to diſcount his bills upon occaſion; and every thing that facilitates this ſpecies of traffic is favourable to the general commerce of a ſtate. But private bankers are enabled to give ſuch credit by the credit they receive from the depoſiting of money in their ſhops; and the bank of ENGLAND in the ſame manner, from the liberty it has to iſſue its notes in all payments. There was an invention of this kind, which was fallen upon

ſome years ago by the banks of EDINBURGH; and which, as it is one of the moſt ingenious ideas that has been executed in commerce, has alſo been thought advantageous to SCOTLAND. It is there called a BANK-CREDIT; and is of this nature. A man goes to the bank, and finds ſurety to the amount, we ſhall ſuppoſe, of a thouſand pounds. This money, or any part of it, he has the liberty of drawing out whenever he pleaſes, and he pays only the ordinary intereſt for it while it is in his hands. He may, when he pleaſes, repay any ſum, ſo ſmall as twenty pounds, and the intereſt is diſcounted from the very day of the repayment. The advantages reſulting from this contrivance are manifold. As a man may find ſurety nearly to the amount of his ſubſtance, and his bank-credit is equivalent to ready money, a merchant does hereby in a manner coin his houſes, his houſehold-furniture, the goods in his warehouſe, the foreign debts due to him, his ſhips at ſea; and can, upon occaſion, employ them in all payments, as if they were the current money of the country. If a man borrow a thouſand pounds from a private hand, beſides that it is not always to be found when required, he pays intereſt for it, whether he be uſing it or not: His bank-credit coſts him nothing except during the very moment in which it is of ſervice to him: And this circumſtance is of equal advantage as if he had borrowed money at much lower intereſt. Merchants, likewiſe, from this invention, acquire a great facility in ſupporting each other's credit, which is a conſiderable ſecurity againſt bankruptcies. A man, when his own bank-credit is exhauſted, goes to any of his neighbours who is not in the ſame condition, and he gets the money, which he replaces at his convenience.

After this practice had taken place during ſome years at EDINBURGH, ſeveral companies of merchants at GLASGOW carried the matter farther. They aſſociated themſelves into different banks, and iſſued

notes ſo low as ten ſhillings, which they uſed in all payments for goods, manufactures, tradeſmen's labour of all kinds; and theſe notes, from the eſtabliſhed credit of the companies, paſſed as money in all payments throughout the country. By this means a ſtock of five thouſand pounds was able to perform the ſame operations as if it were ſix or ſeven; and merchants were thereby enabled to trade to a greater extent, and to require leſs profit in all their tranſactions. But whatever other advantages reſult from theſe inventions, it muſt ſtill be allowed that, beſides giving too great facility to credit, which is dangerous, they baniſh the precious metals; and nothing can be a more evident proof of it, than a compariſon of the paſt and preſent condition of SCOTLAND in that particular. It was found, upon the recoinage made after the Union, that there was near a million of ſpecie in that country: But notwithſtanding the great encreaſe of riches, commerce, and manufactures of all kinds, it is thought that, even where there is no extraordinary drain made by ENGLAND, the current ſpecie will not now amount to a third of that ſum.

But as our projects of paper-credit are almoſt the only expedient by which we can ſink money below its level; ſo, in my opinion, the only expedient by which we can raiſe money above it, is a practice which we ſhould all exclaim againſt as deſtructive, namely, the gathering of large ſums into a public treaſure, locking them up, and abſolutely preventing their circulation. The fluid, not communicating with the neighbouring element, may, by ſuch an artifice, be raiſed to what height we pleaſe. To prove this, we need only return to our firſt ſuppoſition, of annihilating the half or any part of our caſh; where we found, that the immediate conſequence of ſuch an event would be the attraction of an equal ſum from all the neighbouring kingdoms. Nor does

there

there ſeem to be any neceſſary bounds ſet by the nature of things to this practice of hoarding. A ſmall city, like GENEVA, continuing this policy for ages, might ingroſs nine-tenths of the money in EUROPE. There ſeems, indeed, in the nature of man, an invincible obſtacle to that immenſe growth of riches. A weak ſtate, with an enormous treaſure, will ſoon become a prey to ſome of its poorer, but more powerful, neighbours. A great ſtate would diſſipate its wealth in dangerous and ill-concerted projects; and probably deſtroy, with it, what is much more valuable, the induſtry, morals, and numbers of its people. The fluid, in this caſe, raiſed to too great a height, burſts and deſtroys the veſſel that contains it; and mixing itſelf with the ſurrounding element, ſoon falls to its proper level.

So little are we commonly acquainted with this principle, that though all hiſtorians agree in relating uniformly ſo recent an event, as the immenſe treaſure amaſſed by HARRY VII. (which they make amount to 2,700,000 pounds), we rather reject their concurring teſtimony, than admit of a fact which agrees ſo ill with our inveterate prejudices. It is indeed probable, that this ſum might be three-fourths of all the money in ENGLAND. But where is the difficulty in conceiving, that ſuch a ſum might be amaſſed in twenty years, by a cunning, rapacious, frugal, and almoſt abſolute monarch? Nor is it probable, that the diminution of circulating money was ever ſenſibly felt by the people, or ever did them any prejudice. The ſinking of the prices of all commodities would immediately replace it, by giving ENGLAND the advantage in its commerce with the neighbouring kingdoms.

Have we not an inſtance, in the ſmall republic of ATHENS with its allies, who, in about fifty years, between the MEDIAN and PELOPONNESIAN wars, amaſſed a ſum not much inferior to that of HARRY VII?

For all the GREEK hiſtorians * and orators † agree, that the ATHENIANS collected in the citadel more than 10,000 talents, which they afterwards diſſipated to their own ruin, in raſh and imprudent enterpriſes. But when this money was ſet a running, and began to communicate with the ſurrounding fluid; what was the conſequence? Did it remain in the ſtate? No. For we find, by the memorable *cenſus* mentioned by DEMOSTHENES ‡ and POLYBIUS §, that in about fifty years afterwards, the whole value of the republic, comprehending lands, houſes, commodities, ſlaves, and money, was leſs than 6000 talents.

What an ambitious, high-ſpirited people was this, to collect and keep in their treaſury, with a view to conqueſts, a ſum, which it was every day in the power of the citizens, by a ſingle vote, to diſtribute among themſelves, and which would have gone near to triple the riches of every individual! For we muſt obſerve, that the numbers and private riches of the ATHENIANS are ſaid, by ancient writers, to have been no greater at the beginning of the PELOPONNESIAN war, than at the beginning of the MACEDONIAN.

Money was little more plentiful in GREECE during the age of PHILIP and PERSEUS, than in ENGLAND during that of HARRY VII.: Yet theſe two monarchs in thirty years ‖ collected from the ſmall kingdom of MACEDON, a larger treaſure than that of the ENGLISH monarch. PAULUS ÆMILIUS brought to ROME about 1,700,000 pounds ſterling ¶: PLINY ſays 2,400,000 **. And that was but a part of the MACEDONIAN treaſure. The reſt was diſſipated by the reſiſtance and flight of PERSEUS ††

We may learn from STANIAN, that the canton of BERNE had 300,000 pounds lent at intereſt, and had above ſix times as much in their treaſury. Here then is

* THUCYDIDES, lib. ii. and DIOD. SIC. lib. xii.
† *Vid.* ÆSCHINIS *et* DEMOSTHENIS *Epiſt.*
‡ Περι Συμμοριας. § Lib. ii. cap. 62.
‖ TITI LIVII, lib. xiv. cap. 40. ¶ VEL. PATERC. lib. i. cap. 9
** Lib. xxxiii. cap. 3. †† TITI LIVII, *ibid.*

is a ſum hoarded of 1,800,000 pounds *Sterling*, which is at leaſt quadruple what ſhould naturally circulate in ſuch a petty ſtate; and yet no one, who travels in the PAIS DE VAUX, or any part of that canton, obſerves any want of money more than could be ſuppoſed in a country of that extent, ſoil, and ſituation. On the contrary, there are ſcarce any inland provinces in the continent of FRANCE or GERMANY, where the inhabitants are at this time ſo opulent, though that canton has vaſtly encreaſed its treaſure ſince 1714, the time when STANIAN wrote his judicious account of SWITZERLAND *.

The account given by APPIAN† of the treaſure of the PTOLEMIES, is ſo prodigious, that one cannot admit of it; and ſo much the leſs, becauſe the hiſtorian ſays, that the other ſucceſſors of ALEXANDER were alſo frugal, and had many of them treaſures not much inferior. For this ſaving humour of the neighbouring princes muſt neceſſarily have checked the frugality of the EGYPTIAN monarchs, according to the foregoing theory. The ſum he mentions is 740,000 talents, or 191,166,666 pounds 13 ſhil. and 4 pence, according to Dr. ARBUTHNOT's computation. And yet APPIAN ſays, that he extracted his account from the public records; and he was himſelf a native of ALEXANDRIA.

From theſe principles we may learn what judgement we ought to form of thoſe numberleſs bars, obſtructions, and impoſts, which all nations of EUROPE, and none more than ENGLAND, have put upon trade; from an exorbitant deſire of amaſſing money, which never will heap up beyond its level, while it circulates; or from an ill-grounded apprehenſion of loſing their ſpecie, which never will ſink below it. Could any thing ſcatter our riches, it would be ſuch impo-

* The poverty which STANIAN ſpeaks of, is only to be ſeen in the moſt mountainous cantons, where there is no commodity to bring money. And even there the people are not poorer than in the dioceſe of SALTSBURGH on the one hand, or SAVOY on the other.

† *Proem.*

litic contrivances. But this general, ill effect, however, refults from them, that they deprive neighbouring nations of that free communication and exchange which the Author of the world has intended, by giving them foils, climates, and geniufes, fo different from each other.

Our modern politics embrace the only method of baniſhing money, the uſing of paper-credit; they reject the only method of amaſſing it, the practice of hoarding; and they adopt a hundred contrivances which ſerve to no purpoſe but to check induſtry, and rob ourſelves and our neighbours of the common benefits of art and nature.

All taxes, however, upon foreign commodities, are not to be regarded as prejudicial or uſeleſs, but thoſe only which are founded on the jealouſy above-mentioned. A tax on German linen encourages home manufactures, and thereby multiplies our people and induſtry. A tax on brandy encreaſes the ſale of rum, and ſupports our ſouthern colonies. And as it is neceſſary that impoſts ſhould be levied for the ſupport of government, it may be thought more convenient to lay them on foreign commodities, which can eaſily be intercepted at the port, and ſubjected to the impoſt. We ought, however, always to remember the maxim of Dr. SWIFT, That, in the arithmetic of the cuſtoms, two and two make not four, but often make only one. It can ſcarcely be doubted, but if the duties on wine were lowered to a third, they would yield much more to the government than at preſent: Our people might thereby afford to drink commonly a better and more wholeſome liquor; and no prejudice would enſue to the balance of trade, of which we are ſo jealous. The manufacture of ale beyond the agriculture is but inconſiderable, and gives employment to few hands. The tranſport of wine and corn would not be much inferior.

But are there not frequent inſtances, you will ſay, of ſtates and kingdoms which were formerly rich and opulent,

opulent, and are now poor and beggarly? Has not the money left them, with which they formerly abounded? I answer, If they lose their trade, industry, and people, they cannot expect to keep their gold and silver: for these precious metals will hold proportion to the former advantages. When LISBON and AMSTERDAM got the EAST-INDIA trade from VENICE and GENOA, they also got the profits and money which arose from it. Where the seat of government is transferred, where expensive armies are maintained at a distance, where great funds are possessed by foreigners; there naturally follows from these causes a diminution of the specie. But these, we may observe, are violent and forcible methods of carrying away money, and are in time commonly attended with the transport of people and industry: But where these remain, and the drain is not continued, the money always finds its way back again, by a hundred canals, of which we have no notion or suspicion. What immense treasures have been spent, by so many nations, in FLANDERS, since the revolution, in the course of three long wars? More money perhaps than the half of what is at present in EUROPE: But what has now become of it? Is it in the narrow compass of the AUSTRIAN provinces? No, surely: It is most of it returned to the several countries whence it came, and has followed that art and industry, by which at first it was acquired. For above a thousand years, the money of EUROPE has been flowing to ROME, by an open and sensible current; but it has been emptied by many secret and insensible canals: And the want of industry and commerce renders at present the papal dominions the poorest territory in all ITALY.

In short, a government has great reason to preserve with care its people and its manufactures. Its money, it may safely trust to the course of human affairs, without fear or jealousy. Or if it ever give attention to this latter circumstance, it ought only to be so far as it affects the former.

ESSAY VI.

Of the JEALOUSY of TRADE.

HAVING endeavoured to remove one ſpecies of ill-founded jealouſy, which is ſo prevalent among commercial nations, it may not be amiſs to mention another, which ſeems equally groundleſs. Nothing is more uſual among ſtates which have made ſome advances in commerce, than to look on the progreſs of their neighbours with a ſuſpicious eye, to conſider all trading ſtates as their rivals, and to ſuppoſe that it is impoſſible for any of them to flouriſh, but at their expence. In oppoſition to this narrow and malignant opinion, I will venture to aſſert, that the encreaſe of riches and commerce in any one nation, inſtead of hurting, commonly promotes the riches and commerce of all its neighbours; and that a ſtate can ſcarcely carry its trade and induſtry very far, where all the ſurrounding ſtates are buried in ignorance, ſloth, and barbariſm.

It is obvious, that the domeſtic induſtry of a people cannot be hurt by the greateſt proſperity of their neighbours; and as this branch of commerce is undoubtedly the moſt important in any extenſive kingdom, we are ſo far removed from all reaſon of jealouſy. But I go farther, and obſerve, that where an open communication is preſerved among nations, it is impoſſible but the domeſtic induſtry of every one muſt receive an encreaſe from the improvements of the

the others. Compare the ſituation of GREAT BRITAIN at preſent with what it was two centuries ago. All the arts both of agriculture and manufactures were then extremely rude and imperfect. Every improvement, which we have ſince made, has ariſen from our imitation of foreigners; and we ought ſo far to eſteem it happy, that they had previouſly made advances in arts and ingenuity. But this intercourſe is ſtill upheld to our great advantage: notwithſtanding the advanced ſtate of our manufactures, we daily adopt, in every art, the inventions and improvements of our neighbours. The commodity is firſt imported from abroad, to our great diſcontent, while we imagine that it drains us of our money: Afterwards, the art itſelf is gradually imported, to our viſible advantage: yet we continue ſtill to repine, that our neighbours ſhould poſſeſs any art, induſtry, and invention; forgetting that, had they not firſt inſtructed us, we ſhould have been at preſent barbarians; and did they not ſtill continue their inſtructions, the arts muſt fall into a ſtate of languor, and loſe that emulation and novelty which contribute ſo much to their advancement.

The encreaſe of domeſtic induſtry lays the foundation of foreign commerce. Where a great number of commodities are raiſed and perfected for the home-market, there will always be found ſome which can be exported with advantage. But if our neighbours have no art or cultivation, they cannot take them; becauſe they will have nothing to give in exchange. In this reſpect, ſtates are in the ſame condition as individuals. A ſingle man can ſcarcely be induſtrious, where all his fellow-citizens are idle. The riches of the ſeveral members of a community contribute to encreaſe my riches, whatever profeſſion I may follow. They conſume the produce of my induſtry, and afford me the produce of theirs in return.

Nor needs any ſtate entertain apprehenſions, that their neighbours will improve to ſuch a degree in every

every art and manufacture, as to have no demand from them. Nature, by giving a diverſity of geniuſes, climates, and ſoils, to different nations, has ſecured their mutual intercourſe and commerce, as long as they all remain induſtrious and civilized. Nay, the more the arts encreaſe in any ſtate, the more will be its demands from its induſtrious neighbours. The inhabitants, having become opulent and ſkilful, deſire to have every commodity in the utmoſt perfection; and as they have plenty of commodities to give in exchange, they make large importations from every foreign country. The induſtry of the nations, from whom they import, receives encouragement: Their own is alſo encreaſed, by the ſale of the commodities which they give in exchange.

But what if a nation has any ſtaple commodity, ſuch as the woollen manufacture is in ENGLAND? Muſt not the interfering of our neighbours in that manufacture be a loſs to us? I anſwer, that when any commodity is denominated the ſtaple of a kingdom, it is ſuppoſed that this kingdom has ſome peculiar and natural advantages for raiſing the commodity; and if, notwithſtanding theſe advantages, they loſe ſuch a manufacture, they ought to blame their own idleneſs, or bad government, not the induſtry of their neighbours. It ought alſo to be conſidered, that by the encreaſe of induſtry among the neighbouring nations, the conſumption of every particular ſpecies of commodity is alſo encreaſed; and though foreign manufactures interfere with them in the market, the demand for their product may ſtill continue, or even encreaſe; and ſhould it diminiſh, ought the conſequence to be eſteemed ſo fatal? If the ſpirit of induſtry be preſerved, it may eaſily be diverted from one branch to another; and the manufactures of wool, for inſtance, be employed in linen, ſilk, iron, or any other commodities, for which there appears to be a demand. We need not apprehend, that all the objects of induſtry will be exhauſted, or that our manufacturers,

nufacturers, while they remain on an equal footing with thoſe of our neighbours, will be in danger of wanting employment. The emulation among rival nations ſerves rather to keep induſtry alive in all of them; and any people is happier who poſſeſs a variety of manufactures, than if they enjoyed one ſingle great manufacture, in which they are all employed. Their ſituation is leſs precarious; and they will feel leſs ſenſibly thoſe revolutions and uncertainties, to which every particular branch of commerce will always be expoſed.

The only commercial ſtate that ought to dread the improvements and induſtry of their neighbours, is ſuch a one as the DUTCH, who, enjoying no extent of land, nor poſſeſſing any number of native commodities, flouriſh only by their being the brokers, and factors, and carriers, of others. Such a people may naturally apprehend, that as ſoon as the neighbouring ſtates come to know and purſue their intereſt, they will take into their own hands the management of their affairs, and deprive their brokers of that profit which they formerly reaped from it. But though this conſequence may naturally be dreaded, it is very long before it takes place; and by art and induſtry it may be warded off for many generations, if not wholly eluded. The advantage of ſuperior ſtocks and correſpondence is ſo great, that it is not eaſily overcome; and as all the tranſactions encreaſe by the encreaſe of induſtry in the neighbouring ſtates, even a people whoſe commerce ſtands on this precarious baſis, may at firſt reap a conſiderable profit from the flouriſhing condition of their neighbours. The DUTCH, having mortgaged all their revenues, make not ſuch a figure in political tranſactions as formerly; but their commerce is ſurely equal to what it was in the middle of the laſt century, when they were reckoned among the great powers of EUROPE.

Were our narrow and malignant politics to meet with ſucceſs, we ſhould reduce all our neighbouring

nations to the ſame ſtate of ſloth and ignorance that prevails in MOROCCO and the coaſt of BARBARY: But what would be the conſequence? They could ſend us no commodities: They could take none from us: Our domeſtic commerce itſelf would languiſh for want of emulation, example, and inſtruction; and we ourſelves ſhould ſoon fall into the ſame abject condition to which we had reduced them. I ſhall therefore venture to acknowledge, that, not only as a man, but as a BRITISH ſubject, I pray for the flouriſhing commerce of GERMANY, SPAIN, ITALY, and even FRANCE itſelf. I am at leaſt certain, that GREAT BRITAIN, and all thoſe nations, would flouriſh more, did their ſovereigns and miniſters adopt ſuch enlarged and benevolent ſentiments towards each other.

ESSAY VII.

Of the BALANCE of POWER.

IT is a queſtion, whether the *idea* of the balance of power be owing entirely to modern policy, or whether the *phraſe* only has been invented in theſe latter ages. It is certain that XENOPHEN*, in his inſtitution of CYRUS, repreſents the combination of the ASIATIC powers to have ariſen from a jealouſy of the encreaſing force of the MEDES and PERSIANS; and though that elegant compoſition ſhould be ſuppoſed altogether a romance, this ſentiment, aſcribed by the author to the eaſtern princes, is at leaſt a proof of the prevailing notion of ancient times.

In all the politics of GREECE, the anxiety, with regard

* Lib. i.

regard to the balance of power, is apparent, and is expreſsly pointed out to us, even by the ancient hiſtorians. THUCYDIDES* repreſents the league, which was formed againſt ATHENS, and which produced the PELOPONNESIAN war, as entirely owing to this principle. And after the decline of ATHENS, when the THEBANS and LACEDEMONIANS diſputed for ſovereignty, we find, that the ATHENIANS (as well as many other republics) always threw themſelves into the lighter ſcale, and endeavoured to preſerve the balance. They ſupported THEBES againſt SPARTA, till the great victory gained by EPAMINONDAS at LEUCTRA; after which they immediately went over to the conquered, from generoſity, as they pretended, but in reality from their jealouſy of the conquerors †.

Whoever will read DEMOSTHENES's oration for the MEGALOPOLITANS, may ſee the utmoſt refinements on this principle, that ever entered into the head of a VENETIAN or ENGLISH ſpeculiſt. And upon the firſt riſe of the MACEDONIAN power, this orator immediately diſcovered the danger, ſounded the alarm throughout all GREECE, and at laſt aſſembled that confederacy under the banners of ATHENS, which fought the great and deciſive battle of CHÆRONEA,

It is true, the GRECIAN wars are regarded by hiſtorians as wars of emulation rather than of politics; and each ſtate ſeems to have had more in view the honour of leading the reſt, than any well-grounded hopes of authority and dominion. If we conſider, indeed, the ſmall number of inhabitants in any one republic, compared to the whole, the great difficulty of forming ſieges in thoſe times, and the extraordinary bravery and diſcipline of every freeman among that noble people; we ſhall conclude, that the balance of power was, of itſelf, ſufficiently ſecured in GREECE,

* Lib. i.

† XENOPH. Hiſt. Græc. lib. vi. & vii.

GREECE, and needed not to have been guarded with that caution which may be requiſite in other ages. But whether we aſcribe the ſhifting of ſides in all the GRECIAN republics to *jealous emulation* or *cautious politics*, the effects were alike, and every prevailing power was ſure to meet with a confederacy againſt it, and that often compoſed of its former friends and allies.

The ſame principle, call it envy or prudence, which produced the *Oſtraciſm* of ATHENS, and *Petaliſm* of SYRACUSE, and expelled every citizen whoſe ſame or power overtopped the reſt; the ſame principle, I ſay, naturally diſcovered itſelf in foreign politics, and ſoon raiſed enemies to the leading ſtate, however moderate in the exerciſe of its authority.

The PERSIAN monarch was really in his force a petty prince compared to the GRECIAN republics; and therefore it behoved him, from views of ſafety more than from emulation, to intereſt himſelf in their quarrels, and to ſupport the weaker ſide in every conteſt. This was the advice given by ALCIBIADES to TISSAPHERNES*, and it prolonged, near a century, the date of the PERSIAN empire; till the neglect of it for a moment, after the firſt appearance of the aſpiring genius of PHILIP, brought that lofty and frail edifice to the ground, with a rapidity of which there are few inſtances in the hiſtory of mankind.

The ſucceſſors of ALEXANDER ſhowed great jealouſy of the balance of power; a jealouſy founded on true politics and prudence, and which preſerved diſtinct for ſeveral ages the partition made after the death of that famous conqueror. The fortune and ambition of ANTIGONUS† threatened them anew with a univerſal monarchy; but their combination, and their victory at IPSUS ſaved them. And in ſubſequent times, we find, that as the EASTERN princes conſidered the GREEKS and MACEDONIANS as the only real military force with whom they had any intercourſe,

* THUCYD. lib. viii. † DIOD. SIC. lib. xx.

intercourſe, they kept always a watchful eye over that part of the world. The PTOLEMIES, in particular, ſupported firſt ARATUS and the ACHEANS, and then CLEOMENES king of SPARTA, from no other view than as a counterbalance to the MACEDONIAN monarchs. For this is the account which POLYBIUS gives of the EGYPTIAN politics*.

The reaſon, why it is ſuppoſed that the ancients were entirely ignorant of the *balance of power*, ſeems to be drawn from the ROMAN hiſtory more than the GRECIAN; and as the tranſactions of the former are generally more familiar to us, we have thence formed all our concluſions. It muſt be owned, that the ROMANS never met with any ſuch general combination or confederacy againſt them, as might naturally have been expected from their rapid conqueſts and declared ambition; but were allowed peaceably to ſubdue their neighbours, one after another, till they extended their dominion over the whole known world. Not to mention the fabulous hiſtory of their ITALIC wars; there was, upon HANNIBAL'S invaſion of the ROMAN ſtate, a remarkable criſis, which ought to have called up the attention of all civilized nations. It appeared afterwards (nor was it difficult to be obſerved at the time)† that this was a conteſt for univerſal empire; yet no prince or ſtate ſeems to have been in the leaſt alarmed about the event or iſſue of the quarrel. PHILIP of MACEDON remained neuter till he ſaw the victories of HANNIBAL; and then moſt imprudently formed an alliance with the conqueror, upon terms ſtill more imprudent. He ſtipulated, that he was to aſſiſt the CARTHAGINIAN ſtate in their conqueſt of ITALY: after which they engaged to ſend over forces into GREECE, to aſſiſt him in ſubduing the GRECIAN commmonwealths‡.

The

* Lib. ii. cap. 51.

† It was obſerved by ſome, as appears by the ſpeech of AGESILAUS of NAUPACTUM, in the general congreſs of GREECE. See POLYB. lib. v. cap. 104.

‡ TITI LIVII, lib. xxiii. cap. 33.

The RHODIAN and ACHAEAN republics are much celebrated by ancient hiſtorians for their wiſdom and ſound policy; yet both of them aſſiſted the ROMANS in their wars againſt PHILIP and ANTIOCHUS. And what may be eſteemed ſtill a ſtronger proof, that this maxim was not generally known in thoſe ages; no ancient author has remarked the imprudence of theſe meaſures, nor has even blamed that abſurd treaty above-mentioned, made by PHILIP with the CARTHAGINIANS. Princes and ſtateſmen, in all ages, may, before-hand, be blinded in their reaſonings with regard to events; but it is ſomewhat extraordinary, that hiſtorians, afterwards, ſhould not form a ſounder judgment of them.

MASSINISSA, ATTALUS, PRUSIAS, in gratifying their private paſſions, were, all of them, the inſtruments of the ROMAN greatneſs; and never ſeem to have ſuſpected, that they were forging their own chains, while they advanced the conqueſts of their ally. A ſimple treaty and agreement between MASSINISSA and the CARTHAGINIANS, ſo much required by mutual intereſt, barred the ROMANS from all entrance into AFRICA, and preſerved liberty to mankind.

The only prince we meet with in the ROMAN hiſtory, who ſeems to have underſtood the balance of power, is HIERO king of SYRACUSE. Though the ally of ROME, he ſent aſſiſtance to the CARTHAGINIANS during the war of the auxiliaries; "Eſteeming it requiſite," ſays POLYBIUS*, "both in order to "retain his dominions in SICILY, and to preſerve "the ROMAN friendſhip, that CARTHAGE ſhould "be ſafe; leſt by its fall the remainining power "ſhould be able, without contraſt or oppoſition, to "execute every purpoſe and undertaking. And "here he acted with great wiſdom and prudence: "For that is never, on any account, to be overlooked; "nor ought ſuch a force ever to be thrown into one

* Lib. i. cap. 83.

" hand, as to incapacitate the neighbouring ſtates " from defending their rights againſt it." Here is the aim of modern politics pointed out in expreſs terms.

In ſhort, the maxim of preſerving the balance of power is founded ſo much on common ſenſe and obvious reaſoning, that it is impoſſible it could altogether have eſcaped antiquity, where we find, in other particulars, ſo many marks of deep penetration and diſcernment. If it was not ſo generally known and acknowledged as at preſent, it had, at leaſt, an influence on all the wiſer and more experienced princes and politicians. And indeed, even at preſent, however generally known and acknowledged among ſpeculative reaſoners, it has not, in practice, an authority much more extenſive among thoſe who govern the world.

After the fall of the ROMAN empire, the form of government, eſtabliſhed by the northern conquerors, incapacitated them, in a great meaſure, for farther conqueſts, and long maintained each ſtate in its proper boundaries. But when vaſſalage and the feudal militia were aboliſhed, mankind were anew alarmed by the danger of univerſal monarchy, from the union of ſo many kingdoms and principalities in the perſon of the Emperor CHARLES. But the power of the houſe of AUSTRIA, founded on extenſive but divided dominions, and their riches derived chiefly from mines of gold and ſilver, were more likely to decay, of themſelves, from internal defects, than to overthrow all the bulwarks raiſed againſt them. In leſs than a century, the force of that violent and haughty race was ſhattered, their opulence diſſipated, their ſplendor eclipſed. A new power ſucceeded, more formidable to the liberties of EUROPE, poſſeſſing all the advantages of the former, and labouring under none of its defects, except a ſhare of that ſpirit of bigotry and perſecution, with which the houſe of

AUSTRIA was ſo long, and ſtill is ſo much, infatuated.

In the general wars maintained againſt this ambitious power, GREAT BRITAIN has ſtood foremoſt; and ſhe ſtill maintains her ſtation. Beſide her advantages of riches and ſituation, her people are animated with ſuch a national ſpirit, and are ſo fully ſenſible of the bleſſings of their government, that we may hope their vigour never will languiſh in ſo neceſſary and ſo juſt a cauſe. On the contrary, if we may judge by the paſt, their paſſionate ardour ſeems rather to require ſome moderation; and they have oftener erred from a laudable exceſs than from a blamable deficiency.

In the *firſt* place, we ſeem to have been more poſſeſſed with the ancient GREEK ſpirit of jealous emulation, than actuated by the prudent views of modern politics. Our wars with FRANCE have been begun with juſtice, and even, perhaps, from neceſſity; but have always been too far puſhed from obſtinacy and paſſion. The ſame peace, which was afterwards made at RYSWICK in 1697, was offered ſo yearly as the year ninety-two; that concluded at UTRECHT in 1712 might have been finiſhed on as good conditions at GERTRUYTENBERG in the year eight; and we might have given at FRANKFORT, in 1743, the ſame terms which we were glad to accept of at AIX-LA-CHAPELLE in the year forty-eight. Here then we ſee, that above half of our wars with FRANCE, and all our public debts, are owing more to our own imprudent vehemence, than to the ambition of our neighbours.

In the *ſecond* place, we are ſo declared in our oppoſition to FRENCH power, and ſo alert in defence of our allies, that they always reckon upon our force as upon their own: and expecting to carry on war at our expence, refuſe all reaſonable terms of accommodation. *Habent ſubjectos, tanquam ſuos; viles, ut alienos.* All the world knows, that the factious vote

of

of the House of Commons, in the beginning of the last parliament, with the professed humour of the nation, made the Queen of HUNGARY inflexible in her terms, and prevented that agreement with PRUSSIA, which would immediately have restored the general tranquillity of EUROPE.

In the *third* place, we are such true combatants, that, when once engaged, we lose all concern for ourselves and our posterity, and consider only, how we may best annoy the enemy. To mortgage our revenues at so deep a rate, in wars, where we were only accessaries, was surely the most fatal delusion that a nation, which had any pretension to politics and prudence, has ever yet been guilty of. That remedy of funding, if it be a remedy, and not rather a poison, ought, in all reason, to be reserved to the last extremity; and no evil, but the greatest and most urgent, should ever induce us to embrace so dangerous an expedient.

These excesses, to which we have been carried, are prejudicial; and may, perhaps, in time, become still more prejudicial another way, by begetting, as is usual, the opposite extreme, and rendering us totally careless and supine with regard to the fate of EUROPE. The ATHENIANS, from the most bustling, intriguing, warlike people of GREECE, finding their error in thrusting themselves into every quarrel, abandoned all attention to foreign affairs; and in no contest ever took part on either side, except by their flatteries and complaisance to the victor.

Enormous monarchies are, probably, destructive to human nature; in their progress, in their continuance*, and even in their downfal, which never can be very distant from their establishment. The military genius, which aggrandized the monarchy, soon leaves the court, the capital, and the centre of

* If the ROMAN empire was of advantage, it could only proceed from this, that mankind were generally in a very disorderly, uncivilized condition, before its establishment.

such a government; while the wars are carried on at a great distance, and interest so small a part of the state. The ancient nobility, whose affections attach them to their sovereign, live all at court; and never will accept of military employments, which would carry them to remote and barbarous frontiers, where they are distant both from their pleasures and their fortune. The arms of the state must, therefore, be entrusted to mercenary strangers, without zeal, without attachment, without honour; ready on every occasion to turn them against the prince, and join each desperate malcontent, who offers pay and plunder. This is the necessary progress of human affairs: Thus human nature checks itself in its airy elevation: Thus ambition blindly labours for the destruction of the conqueror, of his family, and of every thing near and dear to him. The BOURBONS, trusting to the support of their brave, faithful, and affectionate nobility, would push their advantage, without reserve or limitation. These, while fired with glory and emulation, can bear the fatigues and dangers of war; but never would submit to languish in the garrisons of HUNGARY or LITHUANIA, forgot at court, and sacrificed to the intrigues of every minion or mistress who approaches the prince. The troops are filled with CRAVATES and TARTARS, HUSSARS and COSSACS; intermingled, perhaps, with a few soldiers of fortune from the better provinces: And the melancholy fate of the ROMAN emperors, from the same cause, is renewed over and over again, till the final dissolution of the monarchy.

ESSAY

ESSAY VIII.

Of TAXES.

THERE is a prevailing maxim among ſome reaſoners, *that every new tax creates a new ability in the ſubject to bear it, and that each encreaſe of public burdens encreaſes proportionably the induſtry of the people.* This maxim is of ſuch a nature as is moſt likely to be abuſed; and is ſo much the more dangerous, as its truth cannot be altogether denied: but it muſt be owned, when kept within certain bounds, to have ſome foundation in reaſon and experience.

When a tax is laid upon commodities, which are conſumed by the common people, the neceſſary conſequence may ſeem to be, either that the poor muſt retrench ſomething from their way of living, or raiſe their wages, ſo as to make the burden of the tax fall entirely upon the rich. But there is a third conſequence, which often follows upon taxes, namely, that the poor encreaſe their induſtry, perform more work, and live as well as before, without demanding more for their labour. Where taxes are moderate, are laid on gradually, and affect not the neceſſaries of life, this conſequence naturally follows; and it is certain, that ſuch difficulties often ſerve to excite the induſtry of a people, and render them more opulent and laborious, than others who enjoy the greateſt advantages. For we may obſerve, as a parallel inſtance, that the moſt commercial nations have not always poſſeſſed the greateſt extent of fertile land; but, on the contrary, that they have laboured

under many natural disadvantages. TYRE, ATHENS, CARTHAGE, RDODES, GENOA, VENICE, HOLLAND, are strong examples to this purpose. And in all history, we find only three instances of large and fertile countries, which have possessed much trade; the NETHERLANDS, ENGLAND and FRANCE. The two former seem to have been allured by the advantages of their maritime situation, and the necessity they lay under of frequenting foreign ports, in order to procure what their own climate refused them. And as to FRANCE, trade has come late into that kingdom, and seems to have been the effect of reflection and observation in an ingenious and enterprising people, who remarked the riches acquired by such of the neighbouring nations as cultivated navigation and commerce.

The places mentioned by CICERO*, as possessed of the greatest commerce in his time, are ALEXANDRIA, COLCHUS, TYRE, SIDON, ANDROS, CYPRUS, PAMPHYLIA, LYCIA, RHODES, CHIOS, BYZANTIUM, LESBOS, SMIRNA, MILETUM, COOS. All these, except ALEXANDRIA, were either small islands or narrow territories. And that city owed its trade entirely to the happiness of its situation.

Since therefore some natural necessities or disadvantages may be thought favourable to industry, why may not artificial burdens have the same effect? Sir WILLIAM TEMPLE†, we may observe, ascribes the industry of the DUTCH entirely to necessity, proceeding from their natural disadvantages; and illustrates his doctrine by a striking comparison with IRELAND; "where," says he, "by the largeness "and plenty of the soil, and scarcity of people, all "things necessary to life are so cheap, that an in- "dustrious man, by two days labour, may gain "enough to feed him the rest of the week. Which "I take to be a very plain ground of the laziness attributed

* Epist. ad ATT. lib. ix. ep. 11.

† Account of the NETHERLANDS, chap. 6.

" attributed to the people. For men naturally " prefer eaſe before labour, and will not take pains " if they can live idle; though when, by neceſſity, " they have been inured to it, they cannot leave it, " being grown a cuſtom neceſſary to their health, " and to their very entertainment. Nor perhaps is " the change harder, from conſtant eaſe to labour, " than from conſtant labour to eaſe." After which the author proceeds to confirm his doctrine, by enumerating, as above, the places where trade has moſt flouriſhed, in ancient and modern times; and which are commonly obſerved to be ſuch narrow confined territories, as beget a neceſſity for induſtry.

The beſt taxes are ſuch as are levied upon conſumptions, eſpecially thoſe of luxury; becauſe ſuch taxes are leaſt felt by the people. They ſeem in ſome meaſure, voluntary; ſince a man may chooſe how far he will uſe the commodity which is taxed: They are paid gradually and inſenſibly: they naturally produce ſobriety and frugality, if judiciouſly impoſed: And being confounded with the natural price of the commodity, they are ſcarcely perceived by the conſumers. Their only diſadvantage is, that they are expenſive in the levying.

Taxes upon poſſeſſions are levied without expence; but have every other diſadvantage. Moſt ſtates, however, are obliged to have recourſe to them, in order to ſupply the deficiencies of the other.

But the moſt pernicious of all taxes are the arbitrary. They are commonly converted, by their management, into puniſhments on induſtry; and alſo, by their unavoidable inequality, are more grievous, than by the real burden which they impoſe. It is ſurpriſing, therefore, to ſee them have place among any civilized people.

In general, all poll-taxes, even when not arbitrary, which they commonly are, may be eſteemed dangerous: Becauſe it is ſo eaſy for the ſovereign to add a

little more, and a little more, to the ſum demanded, that theſe taxes are apt to become altogether oppreſſive and intolerable. On the other hand, a duty upon commodities checks itſelf; and a prince will ſoon find, that an encreaſe of the impoſt is no encreaſe of his revenue. It is not eaſy, therefore, for a people to be altogether ruined by ſuch taxes.

Hiſtorians inform us, that one of the chief cauſes of the deſtruction of the Roman ſtate, was the alteration which Constantine introduced into the finances, by ſubſtituting an univerſal poll-tax, in lieu of almoſt all the tithes, cuſtoms, and exciſes, which formerly compoſed the revenue of the *empire*. The people, in all the provinces, were ſo grinded and oppreſſed by the *publicans*, that they were glad to take refuge under the conquering arms of the barbarians; whoſe dominion, as they had fewer neceſſities and leſs art, was found preferable to the refined tyranny of the Romans.

It is an opinion, zealouſly promoted by ſome political writers, that, ſince all taxes, as they pretend, fall ultimately upon land, it were better to lay them originally there, and aboliſh every duty upon conſumptions. But it is denied, that all taxes fall ultimately upon land. If a duty be laid upon any commodity, conſumed by an artiſan, he has two obvious expedients for paying it; he may retrench ſomewhat of his expence, or he may encreaſe his labour. Both theſe reſources are more eaſy and natural, than that of heightening his wages. We ſee, that, in years of ſcarcity, the weaver either conſumes leſs or labours more, or employs both theſe expedients of frugality and induſtry, by which he is enabled to reach the end of the year. It is but juſt that he ſhould ſubject himſelf to the ſame hardſhips, if they deſerve the name, for the ſake of the public, which gives him protection. By what contrivance can he raiſe the price of his labour? The manufacturer who employs him will not give him more: Neither can he;

he; becauſe the merchant, who exports the cloth, cannot raiſe its price, being limited by the price which it yields in foreign markets. Every man, to be ſure, is deſirous of puſhing off from himſelf the burden of any tax which is impoſed, and of laying it upon others: But as every man has the ſame inclination, and is upon the defenſive; no ſet of men can be ſuppoſed to prevail altogether in this conteſt: and why the landed gentleman ſhould be the victim of the whole, and ſhould not be able to defend himſelf, as well as others are, I cannot readily imagine. All tradeſmen, indeed, would willingly prey upon him, and divide him among them, if they could: But this inclination they always have, though no taxes were levied; and the ſame methods, by which he guards againſt the impoſition of tradeſmen before taxes, will ſerve him afterwards, and make them ſhare the burden with him. They muſt be very heavy taxes, indeed, and very injudiciouſly levied, which the artizan will not of himſelf be enabled to pay, by ſuperior induſtry and frugality, without raiſing the price of his labour.

I ſhall conclude this ſubject with obſerving, that we have, with regard to taxes, an inſtance of what frequently happens in political inſtitutions, that the conſequences of things are diametrically oppoſite to what we ſhould expect on the firſt appearance. It is regarded as a fundamental maxim of the TURKISH government, that the *Grand Signior*, though abſolute maſter of the lives and fortunes of each individual, has no authority to impoſe a new tax; and every OTTOMAN prince, who has made ſuch an attempt, either has been obliged to retract, or has found the fatal effects of his perſeverance. One would imagine, that this prejudice or eſtabliſhed opinion were the firmeſt barrier in the world againſt oppreſſion; yet it is certain, that its effect is quite contrary. The emperor, having no regular method of encreaſing his revenue, muſt allow all the baſhaws and governors to

oppreſs

oppreſs and abuſe the ſubjects; and theſe he ſqueezes after their return from their government. Whereas, if he could impoſe a new tax, like our European princes, his intereſt would ſo far be united with that of people, that he would immediately feel the bad effects of theſe diſorderly levies of money; and would find, that a pound, raiſed by a general impoſition, would have leſs pernicious effects, than a ſhilling taken in ſo unequal and arbitrary a manner.

ESSAY IX.

Of Public Credit.

IT appears to have been the common practice of antiquity, to make proviſion, during peace, for the neceſſities of war, and to hoard up treaſures beforehand, as the inſtruments either of conqueſt or defence; without truſting to extraordinary impoſitions, much leſs to borrowing, in times of diſorder and confuſion. Beſides the immenſe ſums above mentioned*, which were amaſſed by Athens, and by the Ptolemies, and other ſucceſſors of Alexander; we learn from Plato†, that the frugal Lacedemonians had alſo collected a great treaſure; and Arrian‡ and Plutarch‖ take notice of the riches which Alexander got poſſeſſion of on the conqueſt of Susa and Ecbatana, and which were reſerved, ſome of them, from the time of Cyrus. If I remember right, the ſcripture

* Eſſay V. † Alcib. 1. ‡ Lib. iii.

‖ Plut. *in vita* Alex. He makes theſe treaſures amount to 80,000 talents, or about 15 millions Sterl. Quintus Curtius (lib. v. cap. 2.) ſays, that Alexander found in Susa above 50,000 talents.

ture alſo mentions the treaſure of HEZEKIAH and the JEWISH princes; as profane hiſtory does that of PHILIP and PERSEUS, kings of MACEDON. The ancient republics of GAUL had commonly large ſums in reſerve*. Every one knows the treaſure ſeized in ROME by JULIUS CÆSAR, during the civil wars; and we find afterwards, that the wiſer emperors, AUGUSTUS, TIBERIUS, VESPASIAN, SEVERUS, *&c.* always diſcovered the prudent foreſight of ſaving great ſums againſt any public exigency.

On the contrary, our modern expedient, which has become very general, is to mortgage the public revenues, and to truſt that poſterity will pay off the incumbrances contracted by their anceſtors: and they, having before their eyes ſo good an example of their wiſe fathers, have the ſame prudent reliance on *their* poſterity; who, at laſt, from neceſſity more than choice, are obliged to place the ſame confidence in a new poſterity. But not to waſte time in declaiming againſt a practice which appears ruinous beyond all controverſy, it ſeems pretty apparent, that the ancient maxims are, in this reſpect, more prudent than the modern; even though the latter had been confined within ſome reaſonable bounds, and had ever, in any inſtance, been attended with ſuch frugality, in time of peace, as to diſcharge the debts incurred by an expenſive war. For why ſhould the caſe be ſo different between the public and an individual, as to make us eſtabliſh different maxims of conduct for each? If the funds of the former be greater, its neceſſary expences are proportionably larger; if its reſources be more numerous, they are not infinite; and as its frame ſhould be calculated for a much longer duration than the date of a ſingle life, or even of a family, it ſhould embrace maxims, large, durable, and generous, agreeably to the ſuppoſed extent of its exiſtence. To truſt to chances and temporary expedients, is, indeed, what the neceſſity of human affairs frequently

*STRABO, lib. iv.

ly renders unavoidable; but whoever voluntarily depend on ſuch reſources, have not neceſſity, but their own folly, to accuſe for their misfortunes, when any ſuch befal them.

If the abuſes of treaſures be dangerous, either by engaging the ſtate in raſh enterprizes, or making it neglect military diſcipline, in confidence of its riches; the abuſes of mortgaging are more certain and inevitable; poverty, impotence, and ſubjection to foreign powers.

According to modern policy, war is attended with every deſtructive circumſtance; loſs of men, encreaſe of taxes, decay of commerce, diſſipation of money, devaſtation by ſea and land. According to ancient maxims, the opening of the public treaſure, as it produced an uncommon affluence of gold and ſilver, ſerved as a temporary encouragement to induſtry, and attoned, in ſome degree, for the inevitable calamities of war.

It is very tempting to a miniſter to employ ſuch an expedient, as enables him to make a great figure during his adminiſtration, without overburdening the people with taxes, or exciting any immediate clamours againſt himſelf. The practice, therefore, of contracting debt, will almoſt infallibly be abuſed in every government. It would ſcarcely be more imprudent to give a prodigal ſon a credit in every banker's ſhop in London, than to empower a ſtateſman to draw bills, in this manner, upon poſterity.

What then ſhall we ſay to the new paradox, that public incumbrances are of themſelves advantageous, independent of the neceſſity of contracting them; and that any ſtate, even though it were not preſſed by a foreign enemy, could not poſſibly have embraced a wiſer expedient for promoting commerce and riches, than to create funds, and debts, and taxes, without limitation? Reaſonings, ſuch as theſe, might naturally have paſſed for trials of wit among rhetoricians, like the panegyrics on folly and a fever, on BUSIRIS

and

and NERO, had we not seen such absurd maxims patronized by great ministers, and by a whole party among us.

Let us examine the consequences of public debts, both in our domestic management, by their influence on commerce and industry; and in our foreign transactions, by their effect on wars and negociations.

Public securities are with us become a kind of money, and pass as readily at the current price as gold or silver. Wherever any profitable undertaking offers itself, how expensive soever, there are never wanting hands enow to embrace it: nor need a trader, who has sums in the public stocks, fear to launch out into the most extensive trade; since he is possessed of funds which will answer the most sudden demand that can be made upon him. No merchant thinks it necessary to keep by him any considerable cash. Bank-stock, or India-bonds, especially the latter, serve all the same purposes; because he can dispose of them, or pledge them to a banker, in a quarter of an hour; and at the same time they are not idle, even when in his escritoire, but bring him in a constant revenue. In short, our national debts furnish merchants with a species of money, that is continually multiplying in their hands, and produces sure gain, besides the profits of their commerce. This must enable them to trade upon less profit. The small profit of the merchant renders the commodity cheaper, causes a greater consumption, quickens the labour of the common people, and helps to spread arts and industry throughout the whole society.

There are also, we may observe, in ENGLAND, and in all states, which have both commerce and public debts, a set of men, who are half merchants, half stock-holders, and may be supposed willing to trade for small profits; because commerce is not their principal or sole support, and their revenues in the funds are a sure resource for themselves and their families. Were there no funds, great merchants would have

no expedient for realizing or ſecuring any part of their profit, but by making purchaſes of land; and land has many diſadvantages in compariſon of funds. Requiring more care and inſpection, it divides the time and attention of the merchant; upon any tempting offer or extraordinary accident in trade, it is not ſo eaſily converted into money; and as it attracts too much, both by the many natural pleaſures it affords, and the authority it gives, it ſoon converts the citizen into the country gentleman. More men, therefore, with large ſtocks and incomes, may naturally be ſuppoſed to continue in trade, where there are public debts; and this, it muſt be owned, is of ſome advantage to commerce, by diminiſhing its profits, promoting circulation, and encouraging induſtry.

But, in oppoſition to theſe two favourable circumſtances, perhaps of no very great importance, weigh the many diſadvantages which attend our public debts, in the whole *interior* œconomy of the ſtate; you will find no compariſon between the ill and the good which reſult from them.

Firſt, It is certain, that national debts cauſe a mighty confluence of people and riches to the capital, by the great ſums levied in the provinces to pay the intereſt; and perhaps, too, by the advantages in trade above mentioned, which they give the merchants in the capital above the reſt of the kingdom. The queſtion is, whether, in our caſe, it be for the public intereſt, that ſo many privileges ſhould be conferred on LONDON, which has already arrived at ſuch an enormous ſize, and ſeems ſtill encreaſing? Some men are apprehenſive of the conſequences. For my own part, I cannot forbear thinking, that, though the head is undoubtedly too large for the body, yet that great city is ſo happily ſituated, that its exceſſive bulk cauſes leſs inconvenience than even a ſmaller capital to a greater kingdom. There is more difference between the prices of all proviſions in PARIS and LANGUEDOC, than between thoſe in LONDON and YORK-

SHIRE. The immenſe greatneſs, indeed, of LONDON, under a government which admits not of diſcretionary power, renders the people factious, mutinous, ſeditious, and even perhaps rebellious. But to this evil, the national debts themſelves tend to provide a remedy. The firſt viſible eruption, or even immediate danger of public diſorders, muſt alarm all the ſtock-holders, whoſe property is the moſt precarious of any; and will make them fly to the ſupport of government, whether menaced by Jacobitiſh violence or democratical frenzy.

Secondly, Public ſtocks, being a kind of paper-credit, have all the diſadvantages attending that ſpecies of money. They baniſh gold and ſilver from the moſt conſiderable commerce of the ſtate, reduce them to common circulation, and by that means render all proviſions and labour dearer than otherwiſe they would be.

Thirdly, The taxes, which are levied to pay the intereſts of theſe debts, are apt either to heighten the price of labour, or be an oppreſſion on the poorer ſort.

Fourthly, As foreigners poſſeſs a great ſhare of our national funds, they render the public, in a manner, tributary to them, and may in time occaſion the tranſport of our people and our induſtry.

Fifthly, The greater part of the public ſtock being always in the hands of idle people, who live on their revenue, our funds, in that view, give great encouragement to an uſeleſs and inactive life.

But though the injury that ariſes to commerce and induſtry from our public funds, will appear upon balancing the whole, not inconſiderable, it is trivial in compariſon of the prejudice that reſults to the ſtate conſidered as a body politic, which muſt ſupport itſelf in the ſociety of nations, and have various tranſactions with other ſtates in wars and negociations. The ill there is pure and unmixed, without any favourable

vourable circumſtance to atone for it; and it is an ill too of a nature the higheſt and moſt important.

We have, indeed, been told, that the public is no weaker upon account of its debts, ſince they are moſtly due among ourſelves, and bring as much property to one as they take from another. It is like transferring money from the right hand to the left, which leaves the perſon neither richer nor poorer than before. Such looſe reaſonings and ſpecious compariſons will always paſs, where we judge not upon principles. I aſk, Is it poſſible, in the nature of things, to overburden a nation with taxes, even where the ſovereign reſides among them? The very doubt ſeems extravagant; ſince it is requiſite, in every community, that there be a certain proportion obſerved between the laborious and the idle part of it. But if all our preſent taxes be mortgaged, muſt we not invent new ones? And may not this matter be carried to a length that is ruinous and deſtructive?

In every nation, there are always ſome methods of levying money more eaſy than others, agreeably to the way of living of the people, and the commodities they make uſe of. In GREAT BRITAIN, the exciſes upon malt and beer afford a large revenue; becauſe the operations of malting and brewing are tedious, and are impoſſible to be concealed; and at the ſame time, theſe commodities are not ſo abſolutely neceſſary to life, as that the raiſing of their price would very much affect the poorer ſort. Theſe taxes being all mortgaged, what difficulty to find new ones! what vexation and ruin of the poor!

Duties upon conſumptions are more equal and eaſy than thoſe upon poſſeſſions. What a loſs to the public, that the former are all exhauſted, and that we muſt have recourſe to the more grievous method of levying taxes!

Were all the proprietors of land only ſtewards to the public, muſt not neceſſity force them to practiſe all the arts of oppreſſion uſed by ſtewards; where the abſence

abſence or negligence of the proprietor render them ſecure againſt enquiry?

It will ſcarcely be aſſerted, that no bounds ought ever to be ſet to national debts; and that the public would be no weaker, were twelve or fifteen ſhillings in the pound, land-tax, mortgaged, with all the preſent cuſtoms and exciſes. There is ſomething, therefore, in the caſe, beſide the mere transferring of property from the one hand to another. In 500 years, the poſterity of thoſe now in the coaches, and of thoſe upon the boxes, will probably have changed places, without affecting the public by theſe revolutions.

Suppoſe the public once fairly brought to that condition, to which it is haſtening with ſuch amazing rapidity; ſuppoſe the land to be taxed eighteen or nineteen ſhillings in the pound; for it can never bear the whole twenty; ſuppoſe all the exciſes and cuſtoms to be ſcrewed up to the utmoſt which the nation can bear, without entirely loſing its commerce and induſtry; and ſuppoſe that all thoſe funds are mortgaged to perpetuity, and that the invention and wit of all our projectors can find no new impoſition, which may ſerve as the foundation of a new loan; and let us conſider the neceſſary conſequences of this ſituation. Though the imperfect ſtate of our political knowledge, and the narrow capacities of men, make it difficult to fortel the effects which will reſult from any untried meaſure, the ſeeds of ruin are here ſcattered with ſuch profuſion as not to eſcape the eye of the moſt careleſs obſerver.

In this unnatural ſtate of ſociety, the only perſons, who poſſeſs any revenue beyond the immediate effects of their induſtry, are the ſtock-holders, who draw almoſt all the rent of the land and houſes, beſides the produce of all the cuſtoms and exciſes. Theſe are men, who have no connections with the ſtate, who can enjoy their revenue in any part of the globe in which they chooſe to reſide, who will naturally bury themſelves in the capital, or in great cities; and who

will ſink into the lethargy of a ſtupid and pampered luxury, without ſpirit, ambition, or enjoyment. Adieu to all ideas of nobility, gentry, and family. The ſtocks can be transferred in an inſtant; and being in ſuch a fluctuating ſtate, will ſeldom be tranſmitted during three generations from father to ſon. Or were they to remain ever ſo long in one family, they convey no hereditary authority or credit to the poſſeſſor; and by this means, the ſeveral ranks of men, which form a kind of independent magiſtracy in a ſtate, inſtituted by the hand of nature, are entirely loſt; and every man in authority derives his influence from the commiſſion alone of the ſovereign. No expedient remains for preventing or ſuppreſſing inſurrections, but mercenary armies: No expedient at all remains for reſiſting tyranny: Elections are ſwayed by bribery and corruption alone: And the middle power between king and people being totally removed, a grievous deſpotiſm muſt infallibly prevail. The landholders, deſpiſed for their poverty, and hated for their oppreſſions, will be utterly unable to make any oppoſition to it.

Though a reſolution ſhould be formed by the legiſlature never to impoſe any tax which hurts commerce and diſcourages induſtry, it will be impoſſible for men, in ſubjects of ſuch extreme delicacy, to reaſon ſo juſtly as never to be miſtaken; or amidſt difficulties ſo urgent, never to be ſeduced from their reſolution. The continual fluctuations in commerce require continual alterations in the nature of the taxes, which expoſes the legiſlature every moment to the danger both of wilful and involuntary error. And any great blow given to trade, whether by injudicious taxes, or by other accidents, throws the whole ſyſtem of government into confuſion.

But what expedient can the public now employ, even ſuppoſing trade to continue in the moſt flouriſhing condition, in order to ſupport its foreign wars and enterprizes, and to defend its own honour and intereſt,

intereſt, or thoſe of its allies? I do not aſk how the public is to exert ſuch a prodigious power as it has maintained during our late wars, where we have ſo much exceeded, not only our own natural ſtrength, but even that of the greateſt empires. This extravagance is the abuſe complained of as the ſource of all the dangers to which we are at preſent expoſed. But ſince we muſt ſuppoſe great commerce and opulence to remain, even after every fund is mortgaged, theſe riches muſt be defended by proportional power; and whence is the public to derive the revenue which ſupports it? It muſt plainly be from a continual taxation of the annuitants, or, which is the ſame thing, from mortgaging anew, on every exigency, a certain part of their annuities; and thus making them contribute to their own defence, and to that of the nation. But the difficulties attending this ſyſtem of policy, will eaſily appear, whether we ſuppoſe the king to have become abſolute maſter, or to be ſtill controlled by national councils, in which the annuitants themſelves muſt neceſſarily bear the principal ſway.

If the prince has become abſolute, as may naturally be expected from this ſituation of affairs, it is ſo eaſy for him to encreaſe his exactions upon the annuitants, which amount only to the retaining money in his own hands, that this ſpecies of property would ſoon loſe all its credit, and the whole income of every individual in the ſtate muſt lie entirely at the mercy of the ſovereign: A degree of deſpotiſm which no oriental monarchy has ever yet attained. If, on the contrary, the conſent of the annuitants be requiſite for every taxation, they will never be perſuaded to contribute ſufficiently even to the ſupport of government; as the diminution of their revenue muſt in that caſe be very ſenſible, would not be diſguiſed under the appearance of a branch of exciſe or cuſtoms, and would not be ſhared by any other order of the ſtate, who are already ſuppoſed to be taxed to the utmoſt. There are inſtances, in

ſome republics, of a hundredth penny, and ſometimes of the fiftieth, being given to the ſupport of the ſtate: but this is always an extraordinary exertion of power, and can never become the foundation of a conſtant national defence. We have always found, where a government has mortgaged all its revenues, that it neceſſarily ſinks into a ſtate of languor, inactivity, and impotence.

Such are the inconveniences, which may reaſonably be foreſeen, of this ſituation, to which GREAT BRITAIN is viſibly tending. Not to mention the numberleſs inconveniences which cannot be foreſeen, and which muſt reſult from ſo monſtrous a ſituation as that of making the public the chief or ſole proprietor of land, beſides inveſting it with every branch of cuſtoms and exciſe, which the fertile imagination of miniſters and projectors have been able to invent.

I muſt confeſs, that there is a ſtrange ſupineneſs, from long cuſtom, creeped into all ranks of men, with regard to public debts, not unlike what divines ſo vehemently complain of with regard to their religious doctrines. We all own, that the moſt ſanguine imagination cannot hope either that this, or any future miniſtry, will be poſſeſſed of ſuch rigid and ſteady frugality, as to make a conſiderable progreſs in the payment of our debts; or that the ſituation of foreign affairs will, for any long time, allow them leiſure and tranquillity for ſuch an undertaking. *What then is to become of us?* Were we ever ſo good Chriſtians, and ever ſo reſigned to Providence, this, methinks, were a curious queſtion even conſidered as a ſpeculative one, and what it might not be altogether impoſſible to form ſome conjectural ſolution of. The events here will depend little upon the contingencies of battles, negociations, intrigues, and factions. There ſeems to be a natural progreſs of things, which may guide our reaſoning. As it would have required but a moderate ſhare of prudence, when we firſt began this practice of mortgaging, to have foretold, from

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the nature of men and of miniſters, that things would neceſſarily be carried to the length we ſee; ſo now, that they have at laſt happily reached it, it may not be difficult to gueſs at the conſequences. It muſt, indeed, be one of theſe two events; either the nation muſt deſtroy public credit, or public credit will deſtroy the nation. It is impoſſible that they can both ſubſiſt, after the manner they have hitherto been managed, in this, as well as in ſome other countries.

There was, indeed, a ſcheme for the payment of our debts, which was propoſed by an excellent citizen, Mr Hutchinson, above thirty years ago, and which was much approved of by ſome men of ſenſe, but never was likely to take effect. He aſſerted, that there was a fallacy in imagining that the public owed this debt; for that really every individual owed a proportional ſhare of it, and paid, in his taxes, a proportional ſhare of the intereſt, beſide the expence of levying theſe taxes. Had we not better, then, ſays he, make a diſtribution of the debt among ourſelves, and each of us contribute a ſum ſuitable to his property, and by that means diſcharge at once all our funds and public mortgages? He ſeems not to have conſidered, that the laborious poor pay a conſiderable part of the taxes by their annual conſumptions, though they could not advance, at once, a proportional part of the ſum required. Not to mention, that property in money and ſtock in trade might eaſily be concealed or diſguiſed; and that viſible property in lands and houſes would really at laſt anſwer for the whole: An inequality and oppreſſion which never would be ſubmitted to. But though this project is not likely to take place, it is not altogether improbable, that, when the nation becomes heartily ſick of their debts, and is cruelly oppreſſed by them, ſome daring projector may ariſe with viſionary ſchemes for their diſcharge. And as public credit will begin, by that time, to be a little frail, the leaſt touch will deſtroy

it, as happened in FRANCE during the regency; and in this manner it will *die of the doctor*.

But it is more probable, that the breach of national faith will be the neceſſary effect of wars, defeats, misfortunes, and public calamities, or even perhaps of victories and conqueſts. I muſt confeſs, when I ſee princes and ſtates fighting and quarrelling amidſt their debts, funds, and public mortgages, it always brings to my mind a match of cudgel-playing fought in a *China* ſhop. How can it be expected, that ſovereigns will ſpare a ſpecies of property, which is pernicious to themſelves and to the public, when they have ſo little compaſſion on lives and properties that are uſeful to both? Let the time come (and ſurely it will come) when the new funds, created for the exigencies of the year, are not ſubſcribed to, and raiſe not the money projected. Suppoſe, either that the caſh of the nation is exhauſted; or that our faith, which has hitherto been ſo ample, begins to fail us. Suppoſe, that, in this diſtreſs, the nation is threatened with an invaſion; a rebellion is ſuſpected or broken out at home; a ſquadron cannot be equipped for want of pay, victuals, or repairs; or even a foreign ſubſidy cannot be advanced. What muſt a prince or miniſter do in ſuch an emergence? The right of ſelf-preſervation is unalienable in every individual, much more in every community: And the folly of our ſtateſmen muſt then be greater than the folly of thoſe who firſt contracted debt, or, what is more, than that of thoſe who truſted or continue to truſt this ſecurity, if theſe ſtateſmen have the means of ſafety in their hands, and do not employ them. The funds, created and mortgaged, will by that time bring in a large yearly revenue, ſufficient for the defence and ſecurity of the nation: Money is perhaps lying in the exchequer ready for the diſcharge of the quarterly intereſt: Neceſſity calls, fear urges, reaſon exhorts, compaſſion alone exclaims: The money will immediately be ſeized for the current ſervice, under the moſt ſolemn proteſta-

tions,

tions, perhaps, of being immediately replaced: But no more is requiſite. The whole fabric, already tottering, falls to the ground, and buries thouſands in its ruins. And this, I think, may be called the *natural death* of public credit: For to this period it tends as naturally as an animal body to its diſſolution and deſtruction.

So great dupes are the generality of mankind, that, notwithſtanding ſuch a violent ſhock to public credit, as a voluntary bankruptcy in England would occaſion, it would not probably be long ere credit would again revive in as flouriſhing a condition as before. The preſent king of France, during the late war, borrowed money at a lower intereſt than ever his grandfather did; and as low as the British parliament, comparing the natural rate of intereſt in both kingdoms. And though men are commonly more governed by what they have ſeen, than by what they foreſee, with whatever certainty; yet promiſes, proteſtations, fair appearances, with the allurements of preſent intereſt, have ſuch powerful influence as few are able to reſiſt. Mankind are, in all ages, caught by the ſame baits: The ſame tricks, played over and over again, ſtill trepan them. The heights of popularity and patriotiſm are ſtill the beaten road to power and tyranny; flattery to treachery; ſtanding armies to arbitrary government; and the glory of God to the temporal intereſt of the clergy. The fear of an everlaſting deſtruction of credit, allowing it to be an evil, is a needleſs bugbear. A prudent man in reality, would rather lend to the public immediately after we had taken a ſpunge to our debts than at preſent; as much as an opulent knave, even though one could not force him to pay, is a preferable debtor to an honeſt bankrupt: For the former, in order to carry on buſineſs, may find it his intereſt to diſcharge his debts, where they are not exorbitant; the latter has it not in his power. The reaſoning of Tacitus*,

* *Hiſt. lib.* iii.

as it is eternally true, is very applicable to our present case. *Sed vulgus ad magnitudinem beneficiorum aderat: Stultissimus quisque pecuniis mercabatur: Apud sapientes cassa habebantur, quæ neque dari neque accepi, salva republica, poterant.* The public is a debtor, whom no man can oblige to pay. The only check which the creditors have upon her, is the interest of preserving credit; an interest which may easily be overbalanced by a great debt, and by a difficult and extraordinary emergence, even supposing that credit irrecoverable. Not to mention, that a present necessity often forces states into measures which are, strictly speaking, against their interest.

These two events, supposed above, are calamitous, but not the most calamitous. Thousands are thereby sacrificed to the safety of millions: But we are not without danger, that the contrary event may take place, and that millions may be sacrificed for ever to the temporary safety of thousands*. Our popular government, perhaps, will render it difficult or dangerous for a minister to venture on so desperate an expedient as that of a voluntary bankruptcy: And though the house of Lords be altogether composed of proprietors of land, and the house of Commons chiefly; and consequently neither of them can be supposed to have great property in the funds; yet the connections of the members may be so great with the proprietors, as to render them more tenacious of public faith, than prudence, policy, or even justice, strictly speaking, requires: And perhaps too, our foreign enemies may be so politic as to discover, that our safety lies in despair, and may not, therefore, show the danger, open and barefaced, till it be inevitable. The balance of power in EUROPE, our grandfathers, our fathers, and we, have all deemed too unequal to be preserved without our attention and assistance: But our children, weary of the struggle, and fettered with incumbrances, may sit down secure, and see their neighbours

* See NOTE [S].

neighbours oppreſſed and conquered; till, at laſt, they themſelves and their creditors lie both at the mercy of the conqueror: And this may properly enough be denominated the *violent death* of our public credit.

Theſe ſeem to be the events which are not very remote, and which reaſon foreſees as clearly almoſt as ſhe can do any thing that lies in the womb of time. And though the ancients maintained, that, in order to reach the gift of prophecy, a certain divine fury or madneſs was requiſite, one may ſafely affirm, that, in order to deliver ſuch prophecies as theſe, no more is neceſſary than merely to be in one's ſenſes, free from the influence of popular madneſs and deluſion.

ESSAY X.

Of some Remarkable Customs.

I Shall obſerve three remarkable cuſtoms in three celebrated governments; and ſhall conclude from the whole, that all general maxims in politics ought to be eſtabliſhed with great caution; and that irregular and extraordinary appearances are frequently diſcovered in the moral, as well as in the phyſical world. The former, perhaps, we can better account for, after they happen, from ſprings and principles, of which every one has within himſelf, or from obſervation, the ſtrongeſt aſſurance and conviction: But it is often fully as impoſſible for human prudence, before-hand, to foreſee and foretel them.

I. One would think it eſſential to every ſupreme council or aſſembly, which debates, that entire liber-

ty

ty of ſpeech ſhould be granted to every member, and that all motions or reaſonings ſhould be received, which can any wiſe tend to illuſtrate the point under deliberation. One would conclude, with ſtill greater aſſurance, that, after a motion was made, which was voted and approved by that aſſembly in which the legiſlative power is lodged, the member who made the motion muſt for ever be exempted from future trial or enquiry. But no political maxim can, at firſt ſight, appear more undiſputable, than that he muſt, at leaſt, be ſecured from all inferior juriſdiction; and that nothing leſs than the ſame ſupreme legiſlative aſſembly, in their ſubſequent meetings, could make him accountable for thoſe motions and harangues, to which they had before given their approbation. But theſe axioms, however irrefragable they may appear, have all failed in the ATHENIAN government, from cauſes and principles too, which appear almoſt inevitable.

By the γραφη παραιομων, or *indictment of illegality*, (though it has not been remarked by antiquaries or commentators), any man was tried and puniſhed in a common court of judicature, for any law which had paſſed upon his motion in the aſſembly of the people, if that law appeared to the court unjuſt, or prejudicial to the public. Thus DEMOSTHENES, finding that ſhip-money was levied irregularly, and that the poor bore the ſame burden as the rich in equipping gallies, corrected this inequality by a very uſeful law, which proportioned the expence to the revenue and income of each individual. He moved for this law in the aſſembly; he proved its advantages*; he convinced the people, the only legiſlature in ATHENS; the law paſſed, and was carried into execution: Yet was he tried in a criminal court for that law, upon the complaint of the rich, who reſented the alteration that he had introduced into the finances†. He was

* His harangue for it is ſtill extant; περι Συμμοριας.

† PIO CTESIPHONTE.

was indeed acquitted, upon proving anew the uſefulneſs of his law.

Ctesiphon moved in the aſſembly of the people, that particular honours ſhould be conferred on Demosthenes, as on a citizen affectionate and uſeful to the commonwealth: The people, convinced of this truth, voted thoſe honours: Yet was Ctesiphon tried by the γραφη παρανομων. It was aſſerted, among other topics, that Demosthenes was not a good citizen, nor affectionate to the commonwealth: And the orator was called upon to defend his friend, and conſequently himſelf; which he executed by that ſublime piece of eloquence, that has ever ſince been the admiration of mankind.

After the battle of Chæronea, a law was paſſed upon the motion of Hyperides, giving liberty to ſlaves, and inrolling them in the troops*. On account of this law, the orator was afterwards tried by the indictment above mentioned, and defended himſelf, among other topics, by that ſtroke celebrated by Plutarch and Longinus. *It was not I,* ſaid he, *that moved for this law: It was the neceſſities of war; it was the battle of* Chæronea. The orations of Demosthenes abound with many inſtances of trials of this nature, and prove clearly, that nothing was more commonly practiſed.

The Athenian Democracy was ſuch a tumultuous government as we can ſcarcely form a notion of in the preſent age of the world. The whole collective body of the people voted in every law, without any limitation of property, without any diſtinction of rank, without control from any magiſtracy or ſenate†; and conſequently without regard to order, juſtice,

* Plutarchus *in vita decem oratorum* Demosthenes gives a different account of this law. *Contra* Aristogiton. *orat.* II. He ſays, that its purport was, to render the ατιμοι ατιτμοι, or to reſtore the privilege of bearing offices in thoſe who had been declared incapable. Perhaps theſe were both clauſes of the ſame law.

† The ſenate of the Bean was only a leſs numerous mob, choſen by lot from among the people; and their authority was not great.

Juſtice, or prudence. The ATHENIANS ſoon became ſenſible of the miſchiefs attending this conſtitution: But being averſe to checking themſelves by any rule or reſtriction, they reſolved, at leaſt, to check their demagogues or counſellors, by the fear of future puniſhment and enquiry. They accordingly inſtituted this remarkable law; a law eſteemed ſo eſſential to their form of government, that ÆSCHINES inſiſts on it as a known truth, that, were it aboliſhed or neglected, it were impoſſible for the Democracy to ſubſiſt*.

The people feared not any ill conſequence to liberty from the authority of the criminal courts; becauſe theſe were nothing but very numerous juries, choſen by lot from among the people. And they juſtly conſidered themſelves as in a ſtate of perpetual pupillage; where they had an authority, after they came to the uſe of reaſon, not only to retract and control whatever had been determined, but to puniſh any guardian for meaſures which they had embraced by his perſuaſion. The ſame law had place in THEBES†; and for the ſame reaſon.

It appears to have been a uſual practice in ATHENS, on the eſtabliſhment of any law eſteemed very uſeful or popular, to prohibit for ever its abrogation and repeal. Thus the demagogue, who diverted all the public revenues to the ſupport of ſhows and ſpectacles, made it criminal ſo much as to move for a repeal of this law‡. Thus LEPTINES moved for a law, not only to recal all the immunities formerly granted, but to deprive the people for the future of the power of

* In CTESIPHONTEM. It is remarkable, that the firſt ſtep after diſſolution of the Democracy by CRITIAS and the Thirty, was to annul the γραφη παρανομων, as we learn from DEMOSTHENES κατα Τιμοκ. The orator in this oration gives us the words of the law, eſtabliſhing the γραφη παρανομων, pag. 297. *ex edit.* ALDI. And he accounts for it, from the ſame principles we here reaſon upon.

† PLUT. *in vita* PELOP.

‡ DEMOST. *Olynth* 1, 2.

of granting any more*. Thus all bills of attainder† were forbid, or laws that affected one Athenian, without extending to the whole commonwealth. These absurd clauses, by which the legislature vainly attempted to bind itself for ever, proceeded from an universal sense in the people of their own levity and inconstancy.

II. A wheel within a wheel, such as we observe in the German empire, is considered by Lord Shaftesbury‡ as an absurdity in politics: But what must we say to two equal wheels, which govern the same political machine, without any mutual check, control, or subordination; and yet preserve the greatest harmony and concord? To establish two distinct legislatures, each of which possesses full and absolute authority within itself, and stands in no need of the others assistance, in order to give validity to its acts; this may appear before-hand altogether impracticable, as long as men are actuated by the passions of ambition, emulation, and avarice, which have hitherto been their chief governing principles. And should I assert, that the state I have in my eye was divided into two distinct factions, each of which predominated in a distinct legislature, and yet produced no clashing in these independent powers; the supposition may appear incredible. And if, to augment the paradox, I should affirm, that this disjointed, irregular government was the most active, triumphant, and illustrious commonwealth, that ever yet appeared; I should certainly be told, that such a political chimera was as absurd as any vision of priests or poets. But there is no need for searching long, in order to prove the reality of the foregoing suppositions; for this was actually the case with the Roman republic.

The legislative power was there lodged in the *comitia*

* Demost. *contra* Lept.

† Demost. *contra* Aristocratem.

‡ Essay on the freedom of wit and humour, part 3. §. 2.

comitia centuriata and *comitia tributa*. In the former, it is well known, the people voted according to their *cenſus*; ſo that when the firſt claſs was unanimous, though it contained not, perhaps, the hundredth part of the commonwealth, it determined the whole; and, with the authority of the ſenate, eſtabliſhed a law. In the latter, every vote was equal; and as the authority of the ſenate was not there requiſite, the lower people entirely prevailed, and gave law to the whole ſtate. In all party-diviſions, at firſt between the PATRICIANS and PLEBIANS, afterwards between the nobles and the people, the intereſt of the Ariſtocracy was predominant in the firſt legiſlature; that of the Democracy in the ſecond: The one could always deſtroy what the other had eſtabliſhed: Nay, the one, by a ſudden and unforeſeen motion, might take the ſtart of the other, and totally annihilate its rival, by a vote, which, from the nature of the conſtitution, had the full authority of a law. But no ſuch conteſt is obſerved in the hiſtory of ROME: No inſtance of a quarrel between theſe two legiſlatures; though many between the parties that governed in each. Whence aroſe this concord, which may ſeem ſo extraordinary?

The legiſlature eſtabliſhed in ROME, by the authority of SERVIUS TULLIUS, was the *comitia centuriata*, which after the expulſion of the kings, rendered the government, for ſome time, very ariſtocratical. But the people, having numbers and force on their ſide, and being elated with frequent conqueſts and victories in their foreign wars, always prevailed when puſhed to extremity, and firſt extorted from the ſenate the magiſtracy of the tribunes, and next the legiſlative power of the *comitia tributa*. It then behoved the nobles to be more careful than ever not to provoke the people. For beſide the force which the latter were always poſſeſſed of, they had now got poſſeſſion of legal authority, and could inſtantly break in pieces any order or inſtitution

which directly oppoſed them. By intrigue, by influence, by money, by combination, and by the reſpect paid to their characters, the nobles might often prevail, and direct the whole machine of government: But had they openly ſet their *comitia centuriata* in oppoſition to the *tributa*, they had ſoon loſt the advantage of that inſtitution, together with their conſuls, prætors, ediles, and all the magiſtrates elected by it. But the *comitia tributa*, not having the ſame reaſon for reſpecting the *centuriata*, frequently repealed laws favourable to the Ariſtocracy: They limited the authority of the nobles, protected the people from oppreſſion, and controlled the actions of the ſenate and magiſtracy. The *centuriata* found it convenient always to ſubmit; and though equal in authority, yet being inferior in power, durſt never directly give any ſhock to the other legiſlature, either by repealing its laws, or eſtabliſhing laws which it foreſaw would ſoon be repealed by it.

No inſtance is found of any oppoſition or ſtruggle between theſe *comitia;* except one ſlight attempt of this kind mentioned by Appian in the third book of his civil wars. Mark Anthony, reſolving to deprive Decimus Brutus of the government of Cisalpine Gaul, railed the *Forum*, and called one of the *comitia*, in order to prevent the meeting of the other, which had been ordered by the ſenate. But affairs were then fallen into ſuch confuſion, and the Roman conſtitution was ſo near its final diſſolution, that no inference can be drawn from ſuch an expedient. This conteſt, beſides, was founded more on form than party. It was the ſenate who ordered the *comitia tributa*, that they might obſtruct the meeting of the *centuriata*, which by the conſtitution, or at leaſt forms of the government, could alone diſpoſe of provinces.

Cicero was recalled by the *comitia centuriata*, though baniſhed by the *tributa*, that is, by a *plebiſcitum*. But his baniſhment, we may obſerve, never was conſidered as a legal deed, ariſing from the free choice

choice and inclination of the people. It was always aſcribed to the violence alone of CLODIUS, and to the diſorders introduced by him into the government.

III. The *third* cuſtom, which we purpoſe to remark, regards ENGLAND; and though it be not ſo important as thoſe which we have pointed out in ATHENS and ROME, is no leſs ſingular and unexpected. It is a maxim in politics, which we readily admit as undiſputed and univerſal, that a power, however great, when granted by law to an eminent magiſtrate, is not ſo dangerous to liberty, as an authority, however inconſiderable, which he acquires from violence and uſurpation. For, beſides that the law always limits every power which it beſtows, the very receiving it as a conceſſion eſtabliſhes the authority whence it is derived, and preſerves the harmony of the conſtitution. By the ſame right that one prerogative is aſſumed without law, another may alſo be claimed, and another, with ſtill greater facility; while the firſt uſurpations both ſerve as precedents to the following, and give force to maintain them. Hence the heroiſm of HAMPDEN's conduct, who ſuſtained the whole violence of royal proſecution, rather than pay a tax of twenty ſhillings not impoſed by parliament; hence the care of all ENGLISH patriots to guard againſt the firſt encroachments of the crown; and hence alone the exiſtence, at this day, of ENGLISH liberty.

There is, however, one occaſion, where the parliament has departed from this maxim; and that is, in the *preſſing of ſeamen*. The exerciſe of an irregular power is here tacitly permitted in the crown; and though it has frequently been under deliberation, how that power might be rendered legal, and granted, under proper reſtrictions, to the ſovereign, no ſafe expedient could ever be propoſed for that purpoſe; and the danger to liberty always appeared greater from law than from uſurpation. While this power is exerciſed to no other end than to man the

navy, men willingly submit to it, from a sense of its use and necessity; and the sailors, who are alone affected by it, find no body to support them, in claiming the rights and privileges, which the law grants, without distinction, to all English subjects. But were this power, on any occasion, made an instrument of faction or ministerial tyranny, the opposite faction, and indeed all lovers of their country, would immediately take the alarm, and support the injured party; the liberty of Englishmen would be asserted; juries would be implacable; and the tools of tyranny, acting both against law and equity, would meet with the severest vengeance. On the other hand, were the parliament to grant such an authority, they would probably fall into one of these two inconveniences: They would either bestow it under so many restrictions as would make it lose its effect, by cramping the authority of the crown; or they would render it so large and comprehensive, as might give occasion to great abuses, for which we could, in that case, have no remedy. The very irregularity of the practice, at present, prevents its abuses, by affording so easy a remedy against them.

I pretend not, by this reasoning, to exclude all possibility of contriving a register for seamen, which might man the navy, without being dangerous to liberty. I only observe, that no satisfactory scheme of that nature has yet been proposed. Rather than adopt any project hitherto invented, we continue a practice seemingly the most absurd and unaccountable. Authority, in times of full internal peace and concord, is armed against law. A continued violence is permitted in the crown, amidst the greatest jealousy and watchfulness in the people; nay proceeding from those very principles: Liberty, in a country of the highest liberty, is left entirely to its own defence, without any countenance or protection: The wild state of nature is renewed, in one of the most civilized societies of mankind: And great violence and dis-

order are committed with impunity; while the one party pleads obedience to the supreme magistrate, the other, the sanction of fundamental laws.

ESSAY XI.

Of the POPULOUSNESS of ANCIENT NATIONS.

THERE is very little ground, either from reason or observation, to conclude the world eternal or incorruptible. The continual and rapid motion of matter, the violent revolutions with which every part is agitated, the changes remarked in the heavens, the plain traces as well as tradition of an universal deluge, or general convulsion of the elements; all these prove strongly the mortality of this fabric of the world, and its passage, by corruption or dissolution, from one state or order to another. It must therefore, as well as each individual form which it contains, have its infancy, youth, manhood, and old age; and it is probable, that, in all these variations, man, equally with every animal and vegetable, will partake. In the flourishing age of the world, it may be expected, that the human species should possess greater vigour both of mind and body, more prosperous health, higher spirits, longer life, and a stronger inclination and power of generation. But if the general system of things, and human society of course, have any such gradual revolutions, they are too slow to be discernible in that short period which is comprehended by history and tradition. Stature and force of body, length of life, even courage and extent of genius, seem hitherto to have

have been naturally, in all ages, pretty much the ſame. The arts and ſciences, indeed, have flouriſhed in one period, and have decayed in another: But we may obſerve, that, at the time when they roſe to greateſt perfection among one people, they were perhaps totally unknown to all the neighbouring nations; and though they univerſally decayed in one age, yet in a ſucceeding generation they again revived, and diffuſed themſelves over the world. As far, therefore, as obſervation reaches, there is no univerſal difference diſcernible in the human ſpecies; and though it were allowed, that the univerſe, like an animal body, had a natural progreſs from infancy to old age; yet as it muſt ſtill be uncertain, whether, at preſent, it be advancing to its point of perfection, or declining from it, we cannot thence preſuppoſe any decay in human nature *. To prove, therefore, or account for that ſuperior populouſneſs of antiquity, which is commonly ſuppoſed, by the imaginary youth or vigour of the world, will ſcarcely be admitted by any juſt reaſoner. Theſe *general phyſical* cauſes ought entirely to be excluded from this queſtion.

There are indeed ſome more *particular phyſical* cauſes of importance. Diſeaſes are mentioned in antiquity, which are almoſt unknown to modern medicine; and new diſeaſes have ariſen and propagated themſelves, of which there are no traces in ancient hiſtory. In this particular we may obſerve, upon compariſon, that the diſadvantage is much on the ſide of the modrens. Not to mention ſome others of leſs moment; the ſmall-pox commit ſuch ravages, as would almoſt alone account for the great ſuperiority aſcribed to ancient times. The tenth or the twelfth part of mankind, deſtroyed every generation, ſhould make a vaſt difference, it may be thought, in the numbers of the people; and when joined to venereal diſtempers, a new plague diffuſed every where, this diſeaſe is perhaps equivalent, by its conſtant operation, to

* See NOTE [T].

the three great ſcourges of mankind, war, peſtilence, and famine. Were it certain, therefore, that ancient times were more populous than the preſent, and could no moral cauſes be aſſigned for ſo great a change; theſe phyſical cauſes alone, in the opinion of many, would be ſufficient to give us ſatisfaction on that head.

But is it certain, that antiquity was ſo much more populous, as is pretended? The extravagancies of VOSSIUS, with regard to this ſubject, are well known. But an author of much greater genius and diſcernment has ventured to affirm, that according to the beſt computations which theſe ſubjects will admit of, there are not now, on the face of the earth, the fiftieth part of mankind, which exiſted in the time of JULIUS CÆSAR *. It may eaſily be obſerved, that the compariſon, in this caſe, muſt be imperfect, even though we confine ourſelves to the ſcene of ancient hiſtory; EUROPE, and the nations round the MEDITERRANEAN. We know not exactly the numbers of any EUROPEAN kingdom, or even city, at preſent: How can we pretend to calculate thoſe of ancient cities and ſtates, where hiſtorians have left us ſuch imperfect traces? For my part, the matter appears to me ſo uncertain, that, as I intend to throw together ſome reflections on that head, I ſhall intermingle the enquiry concerning *cauſes* with that concerning *facts*; which ought never to be admitted, where the facts can be aſcertained with any tolerable aſſurance. We ſhall, *firſt*, conſider whether it be probable, from what we know of the ſituation of ſociety in both periods, that antiquity muſt have been more populous; *ſecondly*, whether in reality it was ſo. If I can make it appear, that the concluſion is not ſo certain as is pretended, in favour of antiquity, it is all I aſpire to.

In general, we may obſerve, that the queſtion, with regard to the comparative populouſneſs of ages or kingdoms,

* *Lettres* PERSANES. See alſo *L'Eſprit de Loix*, liv. xxiii. cap. 17, 18, 19.

kingdoms, implies important consequences, and commonly determines concerning the preference of their whole police, their manners, and the constitution of their government. For as there is in all men, both male and female, a desire and power of generation, more active than is ever universally exerted, the restraints which they lie under, must proceed from some difficulties in their situation, which it belongs to a wise legislature carefully to observe and remove. Almost every man, who thinks he can maintain a family, will have one; and the human species at this rate of propagation, would more than double every generation. How fast do mankind multiply in every colony or new settlement, where it is an easy matter to provide for a family; and where men are nowise straitened or confined, as in long established governments? History tells us frequently of plagues, which have swept away the third or fourth part of a people: Yet in a generation or two, the destruction was not perceived; and the society had again acquired their former number. The lands were again cultivated, the houses built, the commodities raised, the riches acquired, enabled the people, who escaped, immediately to marry, and to rear families, which supplied the place of those who had perished *. And for a like reason, every wise, just, and mild government, by rendering the condition of its subjects easy and secure, will always abound most in people, as well as in commodities and riches. A country, indeed, whose climate and soil are fitted for vines, will naturally be more populous than one which produces corn only; and that more populous than one which is only fitted for pasturage. In general, warm

* This too is a good reason why the small-pox does not depopulate countries so much as may at first sight be imagined. Where there is room for more people, they will always arise, even without the assistance of naturalization bills. It is remarked by Don Geronimo de Ustariz, that the provinces of Spain, which send most people to the Indies, are most populous; which proceeds from their superior riches.

climates, as the neceſſities of the inhabitants are fewer, and vegitation more powerful, are likely to be moſt populous: But if every thing elſe be equal, it ſeems natural to expect, that, wherever there are moſt happineſs and virtue, and the wiſeſt inſtitutions, there will alſo be moſt people.

The queſtion, therefore, concerning the populouſneſs of ancient and modern times, being allowed of great importance, it will be requiſite, if we would bring it to ſome determination, to compare both the *domeſtic* and *political* ſituation of theſe two periods, in order to judge of the facts by their moral cauſes; which is the *firſt* view in which we propoſed to conſider them.

The chief difference between the *domeſtic* œconomy of the ancients and that of the moderns conſiſts in the practice of ſlavery which prevailed among the former, and which has been aboliſhed for ſome centuries throughout the greater part of EUROPE. Some paſſionate admirers of the ancients, and zealous partizans of civil liberty (for theſe ſentiments, as they are, both of them in the main, extremely juſt, are found to be almoſt inſeparable), cannot forbear regretting the loſs of this inſtitution; and whilſt they brand all ſubmiſſion to the government of a ſingle perſon with the harſh denomination of ſlavery, they would gladly reduce the greater part of mankind to real ſlavery and ſubjection: but to one who conſiders coolly on the ſubject, it will appear, that human nature, in general, really enjoys more liberty at preſent, in the moſt arbitrary government of EUROPE, than it ever did during the moſt flouriſhing period of ancient times. As much as ſubmiſſion to a petty prince, whoſe dominions extend not beyond a ſingle city, is more grievous than obedience to a great monarch; ſo much is domeſtic ſlavery more cruel and oppreſſive than any civil ſubjection whatſoever. The more the maſter is removed from us in place and rank, the greater liberty we enjoy; the leſs are our actions inſpected and controlled; and the fainter that cruel com-

compariſon becomes between our own ſubjection, and the freedom, and even dominion of another. The remains which are found of domeſtic ſlavery, in the AMERICAN colonies, and among ſome EUROPEAN nations, would never ſurely create a deſire of rendering it more univerſal. The little humanity commonly obſerved in perſons accuſtomed, from their infancy, to exerciſe ſo great authority over their fellow-creatures, and to trample upon human nature, were ſufficient alone to diſguſt us with that unbounded dominion. Nor can a more probable reaſon be aſſigned for the ſevere, I might ſay, barbarous manners of ancient times, than the practice of domeſtic ſlavery; by which every man of rank was rendered a petty tyrant, and educated amidſt the flattery, ſubmiſſion, and low debaſement of his ſlaves.

According to ancient practice, all checks were on the inferior, to reſtrain him to the duty of ſubmiſſion: none on the ſuperior, to engage him to the reciprocal duties of gentleneſs and humanity. In modern times, a bad ſervant finds not eaſily a good maſter, nor a bad maſter a good ſervant; and the checks are mutual, ſuitably to the inviolable and eternal laws of reaſon and equity.

The cuſtom of expoſing old, uſeleſs, or ſick ſlaves in an iſland of the TYBER, there to ſtarve, ſeems to have been pretty common in ROME; and whoever recovered, after having been ſo expoſed, had his liberty given him by an edict of the emperor CLAUDIUS; in which it was likewiſe forbidden to kill any ſlave merely for old age or ſickneſs*: But ſuppoſing that this edict was ſtrictly obeyed, would it better the domeſtic treatment of ſlaves, or render their lives much more comfortable? We may imagine what others would practiſe, when it was the profeſſed maxim of the elder CATO, to ſell his ſuperannuated ſlaves for any price, rather than maintain what he eſteemed a uſeleſs burden†.

* SUETONIUS in vita CLAUDII. † PLUT. in vita CATONIS.

The *ergaſtula*, or dungeons, where ſlaves in chains were forced to work, were very common all over ITALY. COLUMELLA adviſes*, that they be always built under ground; and recommends † it as the duty of a careful overſeer, to call over every day the names of theſe ſlaves, like the muſtering of a regiment or ſhip's company, in order to know preſently when any of them had deſerted. A proof of the frequency of theſe *ergaſtula*, and of the great number of ſlaves uſually confined in them.

A chained ſlave for a porter, was uſual in ROME, as appears from OVID ‡, and other authors §. Had not theſe people ſhaken off all ſenſe of compaſſion towards that unhappy part of their ſpecies, would they have preſented their friends, at the firſt entrance, with ſuch an image of the ſeverity of the maſter, and miſery of the ſlave?

Nothing ſo common in all trials, even of civil cauſes, as to call for the evidence of ſlaves; which was always extorted by the moſt exquiſite torments. DEMOSTHENES ſays ‖, that, where it was poſſible to produce, for the ſame fact, either freemen or ſlaves as witneſſes, the judges always preferred the torturing of ſlaves as a more certain evidence ¶.

SENECA draws a picture of that diſorderly luxury which changes day into night, and night into day, and inverts every ſtated hour of every office in life. Among other circumſtances, ſuch as diſplacing the meals and times of bathing; he mentions, that, regularly about the third hour of the night, the neighbours of one, who indulges this falſe refinement, hear the noiſe of whips and laſhes, and upon enquiry, find that

* lib. i. cap. 6. † Id. lib. xi. cap i.

‡ Amor. lib. i. eleg. 6.

§ SUETON. *de claris rhetor.* So alſo the ancient poet, *Janitoris tintinire impedimenta audio.*

‖ In *Oniterem orat.* 1.

¶ The ſame practice was very common in ROME; but CICERO ſeems not to think this evidence ſo certain as the teſtimony of free citizens. *Pro Cælio.*

that he is then taking an account of the conduct of his ſervants, and giving them due correction and diſcipline. This is not remarked as an inſtance of cruelty, but only of diſorder, which, even in actions the moſt uſual and methodical, changes the fixed hours that an eſtabliſhed cuſtom had aſſigned for them*

But our preſent buſineſs is only to conſider the influence of ſlavery on the populouſneſs of a ſtate. It is pretended, that, in this particular, the ancient practice had infinitely the advantage, and was the chief cauſe of that extreme populouſneſs which is ſuppoſed in thoſe times. At preſent, all maſters diſcourage the marrying of their male ſervants, and admit not by any means the marriage of the female, who are then ſuppoſed altogether incapacitated for their ſervice. But where the property of the ſervants is lodged in the maſter, their marriage forms his riches, and brings him a ſucceſſion of ſlaves that ſupply the place of thoſe whom age and infirmity have diſabled. He encourages, therefore, their propagation as much as that of his cattle; rears the young with the ſame care; and educates them to ſome art or calling, which may render them more uſeful or valuable to him. The opulent are, by this policy, intereſted in the being at leaſt, though not in the well-being, of the poor; and enrich themſelves, by encreaſing the number and induſtry of thoſe who are ſubjected to them. Each man, being a ſovereign in his own family, has the ſame intereſt with regard to it, as the prince with regard to the ſtate; and has not, like the prince, any oppoſite motives of ambition or vain-glory, which may lead him to depopulate his little ſovereignty. All of it is, at all times, under his eye; and he has leiſure to inſpect the moſt minute detail of the marriage and education of his ſubjects*.

Such

* See NOTE [U].

† We may here obſerve, that if domeſtic ſlavery really encreaſed populouſneſs, it would be an exception to the general rule, that the hap-

Such are the conſequences of domeſtic ſlavery, according to the firſt aſpect and appearance of things: But if we enter more deeply into the ſubject, we ſhall perhaps find reaſon to retract our haſty determinations. The compariſon is ſhocking between the management of human creatures and that of cattle; but being extremely juſt, when applied to the preſent ſubject, it may be proper to trace the conſequences of it. At the capital, near all great cities, in all populous, rich, induſtrious provinces, few cattle are bred. Proviſions, lodging, attendance, labour, are there dear; and men find their account better in buying the cattle, after they come to a certain age, from the remoter and cheaper countries. Theſe are conſequently the only breeding countries for cattle; and by a parity of reaſon, for men too, when the latter are put on the ſame footing with the former. To rear a child in LONDON till he could be ſerviceable, would coſt much dearer, than to buy one of the ſame age from SCOTLAND or IRELAND, where he had been bred in a cottage, covered with rags, and fed on oatmeal or potatoes. Thoſe who had ſlaves, therefore, in all the richer and more populous countries, would diſcourage the pregnancy of the females, and either prevent or deſtroy the birth. The human ſpecies would periſh in thoſe places where it ought to encreaſe the faſteſt; and a perpetual recruit be wanted from the poorer and more deſert provinces. Such a continued drain would tend mightily to depopulate the ſtate, and render great cities ten times more deſtructive than with us, where every man is maſter of himſelf; and provides for his children from the powerful inſtinct of nature, not the calculations of ſordid intereſt. If LONDON, at preſent, without much encreaſing, needs a yearly recruit from the country of

happineſs of any ſociety and its populouſneſs are neceſſary attendants. A maſter, from humour or intereſt, may make his ſlaves very unhappy; yet be careful, from intereſt, to encreaſe their number. Their marriage is not a matter of choice with them, more than any other action of their life.

of 5000 people, as is usually computed, what must it require, if the greater part of the tradesmen and common people were slaves, and were hindered from breeding by their avaricious masters?

All ancient authors tell us, that there was a perpetual flux of slaves to ITALY from the remoter provinces, particularly SYRIA, CILICIA*, CAPPADOCIA, and the lesser ASIA, THRACE, and ÆGYPT; Yet the number of people did not encrease in ITALY; and writers complain of the continual decay of industry and agriculture†. Where then is that extreme fertility of the ROMAN slaves, which is commonly supposed? So far from multiplying, they could not, it seems, so much as keep up the stock without immense recruits‡. And though great numbers were continually manumitted and converted into ROMAN citizens, the numbers even of these did not encrease§, till the freedom of the city was communicated to foreign provinces.

The term for a slave, born and bred in the family, was *verna*‖; and these slaves seem to have been entitled by custom to privileges and indulgences beyond others; a sufficient reason why the masters would not be fond of rearing many of that kind¶. Whoever is acquainted with the maxims of our planters, will acknowledge the justness of this observation¶.

ATTICUS

* Ten thousand slaves in a day have often been sold for the use of the ROMANS at DELUS in CILICIA. STRABO, lib. xiv.

† COLUMELLA, lib. i. *proœm.* et cap. 2. et 7. VARRO, lib. iii. cap. i. HORAT. lib. ii. od. 15. TACIT. *annal.* lib. iii. cap. 54. SUETON. *in vita* AUG. cap. xlii. PLIN. lib. xviii. cap. 13.

‡ *Minore indies plebe ingenua*, says TACITUS, *ann.* lib. xxiv. cap. 7. § See NOTE [X].

‖ *Verna* is used by ROMAN writers as a word equivalent to *scurra*, on account of the petulance and impudence of those slaves. Mart. lib. i. ep. 42. HORACE also mentions the *vernæ procaces*; and PETRONIUS, cap. 24. *vernula urbanitas*. SENECA, *de provid.* cap. 1. *vernularum licentia*.

¶ It is computed in the WEST INDIES, that a stock of slaves grow worse five *per cent.* every year, unless new slaves be bought to recruit them. They are not able to keep up their number, even in those warm countries, where cloaths and provisions are so easily got

ATTICUS is much praiſed by his hiſtorian, for the care which he took in recruiting his family from the ſlaves born in it*: May we not thence infer, that this practice was not then very common?

The names of ſlaves in the GREEK comedies, SYRUS, MYSUS, GETA, THRAX, DAVUS, LYDUS, PHRYX, *&c.* afford a preſumption, that, at ATHENS at leaſt, moſt of the ſlaves were imported from foreign countries. The ATHENIANS, ſays STRABO†, gave to their ſlaves, either the names of the nations whence they were bought, as LYDUS, SYRUS; or the names that were moſt common among thoſe nations, as MANES or MIDAS to a PHRYGIAN, TIBIAS to a PAPHLAGONIAN.

DEMOSTHENES, having mentioned a law which forbad any man to ſtrike the ſlave of another, praiſes the humanity of this law; and adds, that, if the barbarians, from whom the ſlaves were bought, had information that their countrymen met with ſuch gentle treatment, they would entertain a great eſteem ſo the ATHENIANS‡. ISOCRATES too || inſinuates, that the ſlaves of the GREEKS were generally of very commonly barbarians. ARISTOTLE in his Politics§ plainly ſuppoſes, that a ſlave is always a foreigner. The ancient comic writers repreſented the ſlaves as ſpeaking a barbarous language¶. This was an imitation of nature.

got. How much more muſt this happen in EUROPEAN countries, and in or near great cities? I ſhall add, that, from the experience of our planters, ſlavery is as little advantageous to the maſter as to the ſlave, wherever hired ſervants can be procured. A man is obliged to cloath and feed his ſlave; and he does no more for his ſervant: The price of the firſt purchaſe is, therefore, ſo much loſs to him: not to mention, that the fear of puniſhment will never draw ſo much labour from a ſlave, as the dread of being turned off, and not getting another ſervice, will from a free-man.

* CORN. NEPOS in vita ATTICI. We may remark, that ATTICUS's eſtate lay chiefly in EPIRUS; which, being a remote, deſolate place, would render it profitable for him to rear ſlaves there.

† Lib. vii. ‡ IN MIDIAM, p. 221. ex edit. ALDI.

|| Panegyr. § Lib. vii. cap. 10. ſub fin.

¶ ARISTOPH. Equites, l. 17. The ancient ſcholiaſt remarks on this paſſage βαρβαριζει ως δουλος.

It is well known that DEMOSTHENES, in his nonage, had been defrauded of a large fortune by his tutors, and that afterwards he recovered, by a profecution at law, the value of his patrimony. His orations, on that occafion, ftill remain, and contain an exact detail of the whole fubftance left by his father*, in money, merchandife, houfes, and flaves, together with the value of each particular. Among the reft were 52 flaves, handicraftfmen, namely, 32 fword-cutlers, and 20 cabinet-makers†; all males; not a word of any wives, children, or family, which they certainly would have had, had it been a common practice at ATHENS to breed from the flaves: And the value of the whole muft have much depended on that circumftance. No female flaves are even fo much as mentioned, except fome houfe-maids, who belonged to his mother. This argument has great force, if it be not altogether conclufive.

Confider this paffage of PLUTARCH‡, fpeaking of the Elder CATO. "He had a great number of "flaves, whom he took care to buy at the fales of "prifoners of war; and he chofe them young, that "they might eafily be accuftomed to any diet or "manner of life, and be inftructed in any bufinefs "or labour, as men teach any thing to young dogs "or horfes.—And efteeming love the chief fource of "all diforders, he allowed the male flaves to have a "commerce with the female in his family, upon "paying a certain fum for this privilege: But he "ftrictly prohibited all intrigues out of his family." Are there any fymptoms in this narration of that care which is fuppofed in the ancients, of the marriage and propagation of their flaves? If that was a common practice, founded on general intereft, it would furely have been embraced by CATO, who was a great œconomift, and lived in times when the ancient

* In *Amphobum orat.* 1.

† κλινοποιοὶ, makers of thofe beds which the ancients lay upon at meals.

‡ In vita CATONIS.

cient frugality and ſimplicity of manners were ſtill in credit and reputation.

It is expreſsly remarked by the writers of the ROMAN law, that ſcarcely any ever purchaſe ſlaves with a view of breeding from them*.

Our lackies and houſe-maids, I own, do not ſerve much to multiply their ſpecies: But the ancients, beſides thoſe who attended on their perſon, had almoſt all their labour performed, and even manufactures executed, by ſlaves, who lived, many of them, in their family; and ſome great men poſſeſſed to the number of 10,000. If there be any ſuſpicion, therefore, that this inſtitution was unfavourable to propagation (and the ſame reaſon, at leaſt in part, holds with regard to ancient ſlaves as modern ſervants), how deſtructive muſt ſlavery have proved?

Hiſtory mentions a ROMAN nobleman, who had 400 ſlaves under the ſame roof with him: and having been aſſaſſinated at home by the furious revenge of one of them, the law was executed with rigour, and all without exception were put to death†. Many other ROMAN noblemen had families equally, or more numerous; and I believe every one will allow, that this would ſcarcely be practicable, were we to ſuppoſe all the ſlaves married, and the females to be breeders‡.

So early as the poet HESIOD§, married ſlaves, whether male or female, were eſteemed inconvenient. How much more, where families had encreaſed to ſuch an enormous ſize as in ROME, and where the ancient ſimplicity of manners was baniſhed from all ranks of people?

* See NOTE [Y].

† TACIT. *ann.* lib. xiv. cap. 43.

‡ The ſlaves in the great houſes had little rooms aſſigned them, called *cellæ*. Whence the name of cell was transferred to the monks room in a convent. See farther on this head, JUST. LIPSIUS, Saturn. i. cap. 14. Theſe form ſtrong preſumptions againſt the marriage and propagation of the family ſlaves.

§ Opera et Dies, lib. ii. l. 24. alſo l. 220.

XENOPHON in his Oeconomics, where he gives directions for the management of a farm, recommends a ſtrict care and attention of laying the male and the female ſlaves at a diſtance from each other. He ſeems not to ſuppoſe that they are ever married. The only ſlaves among the GREEKS that appear to have continued their own race, were the HELOTES, who had houſes apart, and were more the ſlaves of the public than of individuals*.

The ſame author† tells us, that NICIAS's overſeer, by agreement with his maſter, was obliged to pay him an obolus a day for each ſlave; beſides maintaining them, and keeping up the number. Had the ancient ſlaves been all breeders, this laſt circumſtance of the contract had been ſuperfluous.

The ancients talk ſo frequently of a fixed, ſtated portion of proviſions aſſigned to each ſlave‡, that we are naturally led to conclude, that ſlaves lived almoſt all ſingle, and received that portion as a kind of board-wages.

The practice, indeed, of marrying ſlaves ſeems not to have been very common, even among the country labourers, where it is more naturally to be expected. CATO ‖, enumerating the ſlaves requiſite to labour a vineyard of a hundred acres, makes them amount to 15; the overſeer and his wife, *villicus* and *villica*, and 13 male ſlaves; for an olive plantation of 240 acres, the overſeer and his wife, and 11 male ſlaves; and ſo in proportion to a greater or leſs plantation or vineyard.

VARRO §, quoting this paſſage of CATO, allows his computation to be juſt in every reſpect, except the laſt. For as it is requiſite, ſays he, to have an overſeer and his wife, whether the vineyard or plantation be

* STRABO, lib. viii. † De ratione redituum.

‡ See CATO de re ruſtica, cap. 56. Donatus in Phormion, l. 1. 9. SENECÆ epiſt. 80.

‖ De re ruſt. cap. 10, 11.

§ Lib. i. cap. 18.

be great or ſmall, this muſt alter the exactneſs of the proportion. Had CATO's computation been erroneous in any other reſpect, it had certainly been corrected by VARRO, who ſeems fond of diſcovering ſo trivial an error.

The ſame author* as well as COLUMELLA†, recommends it as requiſite to give a wife to the overſeer, in order to attach him the more ſtrongly to his maſter's ſervice. This was therefore a peculiar indulgence granted to a ſlave, in whom ſo great confidence was repoſed.

In the ſame place, VARRO mentions it as an uſeful precaution, not to buy too many ſlaves from the ſame nation, leſt they beget factions and ſeditions in the family: A preſumption, that in ITALY, the greater part, even of the country labouring ſlaves (for he ſpeaks of no other), were bought from the remoter provinces. All the world knows, that the family ſlaves in ROME, who were inſtruments of ſhow and luxury, were commonly imported from the eaſt. *Hoc profecere*, ſays PLINY, ſpeaking of the jealous care of maſters, *mancipiorum legiones, et in domo turba externa, ac ſervorum quoque cauſa nomenclator adhibendus*‡

It is indeed recommended by VARRO‖, to propagate young ſhepherds in the family from the old ones. For as grazing farms were commonly in remote and cheap places, and each ſhepherd lived in a cottage apart, his marriage and encreaſe were not liable to the ſame inconveniences as in dearer places, and where many ſervants lived in the family; which was univerſally the caſe in ſuch of the ROMAN farms as produced wine or corn. If we conſider this exception with regard to ſhepherds, and weigh the reaſons of it, it will ſerve for a ſtrong confirmation of all our foregoing ſuſpicions§.

Co-

* Lib. i. cap. 17. † Lib i. cap. 18.

‡ Lib. xxxiii. cap. 1. So likewiſe TACITUS, *annal.* lib. xiv. cap. 44.

‖ Lib. ii. cap. 10.

§ Paſtoris duri, eſt hic filius, ille bubulci. JUVEN. ſat. 11. 151

COLUMELLA *, I own, adviſes the maſter to give a reward, and even liberty to a female ſlave, that had reared him above three children: A proof, that ſometimes the ancients propagated from their ſlaves; which, indeed, cannot be denied. Were it otherwiſe, the practice of ſlavery being ſo common in antiquity, muſt have been deſtructive to a degree which no expedient could repair. All I pretend to infer from theſe reaſonings is, that ſlavery is in general diſadvantageous both to the happineſs and populouſneſs of mankind, and that its place is much better ſupplied by the practice of hired ſervants.

The laws, or as ſome writers calls them, the ſeditions of the GRACCHI, were occaſioned by their obſerving the encreaſe of ſlaves all over ITALY, and the diminution of free citizens. APPIAN† aſcribes this encreaſe to the propagation of the ſlaves: PLUTARCH‡ to the purchaſing of barbarians, who were chained and impriſoned βάρβαρικα δεσμωτήρια‖. It is to be preſumed that both cauſes concurred.

SICILY, ſays FLORUS§, was full of *ergaſtula*, and was cultivated by labourers in chains. EUNUS and ATHENIO excited the ſervile war, by breaking up theſe monſtrous priſons, and giving liberty to 60,000 ſlaves. The younger POMPEY augmented his army in SPAIN by the ſame expedient¶. If the country

* Lib. i. cap. 8. † De bel. civ. lib. i.

‡ In vita TIB. & C. GRACCHI.

‖ To the ſame purpoſe is that paſſage of the elder SENECA, ex controverſia 5. lib. v. "Arata quondam populis rura, ſingulorum ergaſtulorum ſunt; latiuſque nunc villici, quam olim reges, imperant. At nunc eadem," ſays PLINY, "vincti pedes, damnatæ manus, inſcripti vultus exercent." Lib. xviii. cap. 3. So alſo MARTIAL.

"Et ſonet innumera compede Thuſcus ager." Lib. ix. ep. 23.

And LUCAN. "Tum longos jungere fines
Agrorum, et quondam duro ſulcata Camilli,
Vomere et antiquas Curiorum paſſa ligones,
Longa ſub ignotis extendere rura colonis." Lib. i.

"Vincto foſſore coluntur
Heſperiæ ſegetes——" Lib. vii.

§ Lib. iii. cap. 19. ¶ Id. lib. iv. cap. 8.

labourers, throughout the ROMAN empire, were ſo generally in this ſituation, and if it was difficult or impoſſible to find ſeparate lodgings for the families of the city ſervants, how unfavourable to propagation, as well as to humanity, muſt the inſtitution of domeſtic ſlavery be eſteemed?

CONSTANTINOPLE, at preſent, requires the ſame recruits of ſlaves from all the provinces that ROME did of old; and theſe provinces are of conſequence far from being populous.

EGYPT, according to Monſ. MAILLET, ſends continual colonies of black ſlaves to the other parts of the TURKISH empire; and receives annually an equal return of white: The one brought from the inland parts of AFRICA; the other from MINGRELIA, CIRCASSIA, and TARTARY.

Our modern convents are, no doubt, bad inſtitutions: But there is reaſon to ſuſpect, that anciently every great family in ITALY, and probably in other parts of the world, was a ſpecies of convent. And though we have reaſon to condemn all thoſe popiſh inſtitutions as nurſeries of ſuperſtition, burthenſome to the public, and oppreſſive to the poor priſoners, male as well as female; yet may it be queſtioned whether they be ſo deſtructive to the populouſneſs of a ſtate as is commonly imagined. Were the land which belongs to a convent beſtowed on a nobleman, he would ſpend its revenue on dogs, horſes, grooms, footmen, cooks, and houſe-maids; and his family would not furniſh many more citizens than the convent.

The common reaſon why any parent thruſts his daughters into nunneries, is, that he may not be overburthened with too numerous a family; but the ancients had a method almoſt as innocent, and more effectual to that purpoſe, to wit, expoſing their children in early infancy. This practice was very common; and is not ſpoken of by any author of thoſe

times

times with the horror it deſerves, or ſcarcely * even with diſapprobation. PLUTARCH, the humane, good-natured PLUTARCH†, mentions it as a merit in ATTALUS, king of PERGAMUS, that he murdered, or, if you will, expoſed all his own children, in order to leave his crown to the ſon of his brother EUMENES; ſignalizing in this manner his gratitude and affection to EUMENES, who had left him his heir preferably to that ſon. It was SOLON, the moſt celebrated of the ſages of GREECE, that gave parents permiſſion by law to kill their children‡.

Shall we then allow theſe two circumſtances to compenſate each other, to wit, monaſtic vows, and the expoſing of children, and to be unfavourable, in equal degrees, to the propagation of mankind? I doubt the advantage is here on the ſide of antiquity. Perhaps, by an odd connection of cauſes, the barbarous practice of the ancients might rather render thoſe times more populous. By removing the terrors of too numerous a family it would engage many people in marriage; and ſuch is the force of natural affection, that very few, in compariſon, would have reſolution enough, when it came to the puſh, to carry into execution their former intentions.

CHINA, the only country where this practice of expoſing children prevails at preſent, is the moſt populous country we know of; and every man is married before he is twenty. Such early marriages could ſcarcely be general, had not men the proſpect of ſo eaſy a method of getting rid of their children. I own, that‖ PLUTARCH ſpeaks of it as a very general maxim of the poor to expoſe their children; and as the rich were then averſe to marriage, on account of the courtſhip they met with from thoſe who expected

* TACITUS blames it. De morib. Germ.

†De fraterno amore. SENECA alſo approves of the expoſing of ſickly infirm children. De ira, lib. i. cap. 15.

‡ SEXT. EMP. lib. iii. cap. 24.

‖ De amore prolis.

pected legacies from them, the public muſt have been in a bad ſituation between them*.

Of all ſciences there is none, where firſt appearances are more deceitful than in politics. Hoſpitals for foundlings ſeem favourable to the encreaſe of numbers; and perhaps may be ſo, when kept under proper reſtrictions. But when they open the door to every one, without diſtinction, they have probably a contrary effect, and are pernicious to the ſtate. It is computed, that every ninth child born at PARIS is ſent to the hoſpital; though it ſeems certain, according to the common courſe of human affairs, that it is not a hundredth child whoſe parents are altogether incapacitated to rear and educate him. The great difference for health, induſtry, and morals, between an education in an hoſpital and that in a private family, ſhould induce us not to make the entrance into the former too eaſy and engaging. To kill one's own child is ſhocking to nature, and muſt therefore be ſomewhat unuſual; but to turn over the care of him upon others, is very tempting to the natural indolence of mankind.

Having conſidered the domeſtic life and manners of the ancients, compared to thoſe of the moderns; where, in the main, we ſeem rather ſuperior, ſo far as the preſent queſtion is concerned; we ſhall now examine the *political* cuſtoms and inſtitutions of both ages, and weigh their influence in retarding or forwarding the propagation of mankind.

Before the encreaſe of the ROMAN power, or rather till its full eſtabliſhment, almoſt all the nations which are the ſcene of ancient hiſtory, were divided into ſmall territories or petty commonwealths, where of courſe a great equality of fortune prevailed, and the center of the government was always very near its frontiers.

This was the ſituation of affairs not only in GREECE and ITALY, but alſo in SPAIN, GAUL, GERMANY, AFRICA,

* See NOTE [Z].

AFRIC, and a great part of the LESSER ASIA: And it must be owned, that no institution could be more favourable to the propagation of mankind. For, though a man of an overgrown fortune, not being able to consume more than another, must share it with those who serve and attend him; yet their possession being precarious, they have not the same encouragement to marry, as if each had a small fortune, secure and independent. Enormous cities are, besides, destructive to society, beget vice and disorder of all kinds, starve the remoter provinces, and even starve themselves, by the prices to which they raise all provisions. Where each man had his little house and field to himself, and each county had its capital, free and independent; what a happy situation of mankind! How favourable to industry and agriculture; to marriage and propagation! The prolific virtue of men, were it to act in its full extent, without that restraint which poverty and necessity impose on it, would double the number every generation: And nothing surely can give it more liberty, than such small commonwealths, and such an equality of fortune among the citizens. All small states naturally produce equality of fortune, because they afford no opportunities of great encrease; but small commonwealths much more, by that division of power and authority which is essential to them.

When XENOPHON* returned after the famous expedition with CYRUS, he hired himself and 6000 of the GREEKS into the service of SEUTHES, a prince of THRACE; and the articles of his agreement were, that each soldier should receive a *duric* a month, each captain two *darics*, and he himself, as general, four: A regulation of pay which would not a little surprise our modern officers.

DEMOSTHENES and ÆSCHINES, with eight more, were sent ambassadors to PHILIP of MACEDON, and their appointments for above four months were a

* *De exp.* CYR. lib. vii.

thousand *drachmas*, which is less than a *drachma* a-day for each ambassador*. But a *drachma* a-day, nay sometimes two †, was the pay of a common foot-soldier.

A centurion among the ROMANS had only double pay to a private man in POLYBIUS's time‡; and we accordingly find the gratuities after a triumph regulated by that proportion ‖. But MARK ANTHONY and the triumvirate gave the centurions five times the reward of the other §. So much had the encrease of the commonwealth encreased the inequality among the citizens ¶.

It must be owned, that the situation of affairs in modern times, with regard to civil liberty, as well as equality of fortune, is not near so favourable, either to the propagation or happiness of mankind. EUROPE is shared out mostly into great monarchies; and such parts of it as are divided into small territories, are commonly governed by absolute princes, who ruin their people by a mimicry of the greater monarchs, in the splendor of their court and number of their forces. SWISSERLAND alone and HOLLAND resemble the ancient republics; and though the former is far from possessing any advantage either of soil, climate, or commerce, yet the numbers of people with which it abounds, notwithstanding their enlisting themselves into every service in EUROPE, prove sufficiently the advantages of their political institutions.

The ancient republics derived their chief or only security from the numbers of their citizens. The TRACHINIANS having lost great numbers of their people, the remainder, instead of enriching themselves by the

* DEMOST. *de falsa leg.* He calls it a considerable sum.
† THUCYD. lib. iii. ‡ Lib. vi. cap. 37.
‖ TIT. LIV lib. xli. cap. 7. 13. & *alibi passim.*
§ APPIAN. *De bell. civ.* lib iv.
¶ CÆSAR gave the centurions ten times the gratuity of the common soldier. *De bello Gallico*, lib viii. In the RHODIAN cartel, mentioned afterwards, no distinction in the ransom was made on account of ranks in the army.

the inheritance of their fellow-citizens, applied to SPARTA, their metropolis, for a new ſtock of inhabitants. The SPARTANS immediately collected ten thouſand men; among whom the old citizens divided the lands of which the former proprietors had periſhed*.

After TIMOLEON had baniſhed DIONYSIUS from SYRACUSE, and had ſettled the affairs of SICILY, finding the cities of SYRACUSE and SELLINUNTIUM extremely depopulated by tyranny, war, and faction, he invited over from GREECE ſome new inhabitants to repeople them†. Immediately forty thouſand men (PLUTARCH‡ ſays ſixty thouſand) offered themſelves; and he diſtributed ſo many lots of land among them, to the great ſatisfaction of the ancient inhabitants. A proof at once of the maxims of ancient policy, which affected populouſneſs more than riches; and of the good effects of theſe maxims, in the extreme populouſneſs of that ſmall country GREECE, which could at once ſupply ſo great a colony. The caſe was not much different with the ROMANS in early times. He is a pernicious citizen, ſaid M. CURIUS, who cannot be content with ſeven‖ acres. Such ideas of equality could not fail of producing great numbers of people.

We muſt now conſider what diſadvantages the ancients lay under with regard to populouſneſs, and what checks they received from their political maxims and inſtitutions. There are commonly compenſations in every human condition; and though theſe compenſations be not always perfectly equal, yet they ſerve, at leaſt, to reſtrain the prevailing principle. To compare them and eſtimate their influence, is indeed difficult, even where they take place in the ſame age, and in neighbouring countries: But where ſeveral ages have intervened, and only ſcattered lights are afforded us by ancient authors, what can we do but amuſe by talking *pro* and *con*, on an intereſting

* DIOD. SIC. lib. xii. THUCYD. lib. iii.

† DIOD. SIC. lib. xvi ‡ *In vita* TIMOL.

‖ See NOTE [AA]

ſting ſubject, and thereby correcting all haſty and violent determinations?

Firſt, We may obſerve, that the ancient republics were almoſt in perpetual war; a natural effect of their martial ſpirit, their love of liberty, their mutual emulation, and that hatred which generally prevails among nations that live in cloſe neighbourhood. Now, war in a ſmall ſtate is much more deſtructive than in a great one; both becauſe all the inhabitants, in the former caſe, muſt ſerve in the armies; and becauſe the whole ſtate is frontier, and is all expoſed to the inroads of the enemy.

The maxims of ancient war were much more deſtructive than thoſe of modern; chiefly by that diſtribution of plunder in which the ſoldiers were indulged. The private men in our armies are ſuch a low ſet of people, that we find any abundance, beyond their ſimple pay, breeds confuſion and diſorder among them, and a total diſſolution of diſcipline. The very wretchedneſs and meanneſs of thoſe who fill the modern armies, render them leſs deſtructive to the countries which they invade: One inſtance, among many, of the deceitfulneſs of firſt appearances in all political reaſonings *.

Ancient battles were much more bloody, by the very nature of the weapons employed in them. The ancients drew up their men 16 or 20, ſometimes 50, men deep, which made a narrow front; and it was not difficult to find a field, in which both armies might be marſhalled, and might engage with each other. Even where any body of the troops was kept off by hedges, hillocks, woods, or hollow ways, the battle was not ſo ſoon decided between the contending parties, but that the others had time to overcome the difficulties

* The ancient ſoldiers, being free citizens, above the loweſt rank, were all married. Our modern ſoldiers are either forced to live unmarried, or their marriages turn to ſmall account towards the increaſe of mankind. A circumſtance which ought, perhaps, to be taken into conſideration, as of ſome conſequence in favour of the ancients.

difficulties which oppoſed them, and take part in the engagement. And as the whole army was thus engaged, and each man cloſely buckled to his antagoniſt, the battles were commonly very bloody, and great ſlaughter was made on both ſides, eſpecially on the vanquiſhed. The long thin lines, required by the fire-arms, and the quick deciſion of the fray, render our modern engagements but partial rencounters; and enable the general, who is foiled in the beginning of the day, to draw off the greater part of his army ſound and entire.

The battles of antiquity, both by their duration and their reſemblance to ſingle combats, were wrought up to a degree of fury quite unknown to latter ages. Nothing could then engage the combatants to give quarter but the hopes of profit, by making ſlaves of their priſoners. In civil war, as we learn from TACITUS *, the battles were the moſt bloody, becauſe the priſoners were not ſlaves.

What a ſtout reſiſtance muſt be made, where the vanquiſhed expected ſo hard a fate! How inveterate the rage, where the maxims of war were, in every reſpect, ſo bloody and ſevere!

Inſtances are frequent, in ancient hiſtory, of cities beſieged, whoſe inhabitants, rather than open their gates, murdered their wives and children, and ruſhed themſelves on a voluntary death, ſweetened perhaps by a little proſpect of revenge upon the enemy. GREEKS †, as well as BARBARIANS, have often been wrought up to this degree of fury. And the ſame determined ſpirit and cruelty muſt, in other inſtances leſs remarkable, have been deſtructive to human ſociety, in thoſe petty commonwealths which lived in cloſe neighbourhood, and were engaged in perpetual wars and contentions.

2 Some-

* Hiſt. lib. ii. cap. 44.

† As ABYDUS, mentioned by LIVY, lib. xxxi. cap. 17, 18. and POLYB. lib. xvi. As alſo the XANTHIANS, APPIAN. *de bell. civil.* lib. iv.

Sometimes the wars in GREECE, says PLUTARCH *, were carried on entirely by inroads, and robberies, and piracies. Such a method of war must be more destructive in small states, than the bloodiest battles and sieges.

By the laws of the twelve tables, possession during two years formed a prescription for land; one year for moveables * : An indication, that there was not in ITALY, at that time, much more order, tranquillity, and settled police, than there is at present among the TARTARS.

The only cartel I remember in ancient history, is that between DEMETRIUS POLIORCETES and the RHODIANS; when it was agreed, that a free citizen should be restored for 1000 *drachmas*, a slave bearing arms for 500 †.

But, *secondly*, It appears that ancient manners were more unfavourable than the modern, not only in times of war, but also in times of peace; and that too in every respect, except the love of civil liberty and of equality, which is, I own, of considerable importance. To exclude faction from a free government, is very difficult, if not altogether impracticable; but such inveterate rage between the factions, and such bloody maxims, are found, in modern times, amongst religious parties alone. In ancient history we may always observe, where one party prevailed, whether the nobles or people (for I can observe no difference in this respect ‡), that they immediately butchered all of the opposite party who fell into their hands, and banished such as had been so fortunate as to escape their fury. No form of process, no law, no trial, no pardon. A fourth, a third, perhaps near half of the city, was slaughtered, or expelled, every revolution; and the exiles

* In *vita* ARATI.

† INST. lib. ii. cap. 6. ‡ DIOD. SICUL. lib. xx.

‖ LYSIAS, who was himself of the popular faction, and very narrowly escaped from the thirty tyrants, says, that the Democracy was as violent a government as the Oligarchy. *Orat.* 24. *de statu popul.*

exiles always joined foreign enemies, and did all the mischief possible to their fellow-citizens; till fortune put it in their power to take full revenge by a new revolution. And as these were frequent in such violent governments, the disorder, diffidence, jealousy, enmity, which must prevail, are not easy for us to imagine in this age of the world.

There are only two revolutions I can recollect in ancient history, which passed without great severity, and great effusion of blood in massacres and assassinations, namely, the restoration of the ATHENIAN Democracy by THRASYBULUS, and the subduing of the ROMAN republic by CÆSAR. We learn from ancient history, that THRASYBULUS passed a general amnesty for all past offences; and first introduced that word, as well as practice, into GREECE *. It appears, however, from many orations of LYSIAS †, that the chief, and even some of the subaltern offenders, in the preceding tyranny, were tried, and capitally punished. And as to CÆSAR's clemency, though much celebrated, it would not gain great applause in the present age. He butchered, for instance, all CATO's senate, when he became master of UTICA ‡; and these, we may readily believe, were not the most worthless of the party. All those who had borne arms against that usurper, were attainted; and, by HIRTIUS's law, declared incapable of all public offices.

These people were extremely fond of liberty; but seem not to have understood it very well. When the thirty tyrants first established their dominion at ATHENS, they began with seizing all the sycophants and informers, who had been so troublesome during the Democracy, and putting them to death by an arbritary sentence and execution. *Every man*, says SALLUST || and LYSIAS § *was rejoiced at these punishments;*

* CICERO, PHILIP I.

† As *orat.* 11. *contra* ERATOST. *orat.* 12. *contra* AGORAT. *orat.* 15. *pro* MANTITH. ‡ APPIAN. *de bel. civ.* lib. ii.

|| See CÆSAR's speech *de bell. Catil.*

§ *Orat.* 24. And in *orat.* 29. he mentions the factious spirit of the

ments; not considering, that liberty was from that moment annihilated.

The utmost energy of the nervous style of THUCYDIDES, and the copiousness and expression of the GREEK language, seem to sink under that historian, when he attempts to describe the disorders which arose from faction throughout all the GRECIAN commonwealths. You would imagine, that he still labours with a thought greater than he can find words to communicate. And he concludes his pathetic description with an observation, which is at once refined and solid: "In these contests, "says he, "those who were the "dullest, and most stupid, and had the least foresight, "commonly prevailed. For being conscious of this "weakness, and dreading to be over-reached by "those of greater penetration, they went to work "hastily, without premeditation, by the sword and "poinard, and thereby got the start of their antagonists, who were forming fine schemes and projects "for their destruction *."

Not to mention DIONYSIUS † the elder, who is computed to have butchered in cool blood above 10,000 of his fellow-citizens; or AGATHOCLES ‡, NABIS ||, and others, still more bloody than he; the transactions, even in free governments, were extremely violent and destructive. At ATHENS, the thirty tyrants and the nobles, in a twelvemonth, murdered, whithout trial, about 1200 of the people, and banished above the half of the citizens that remained §. In ARGOS, near the same time, the people killed 1200 of the nobles; and afterwards their own demagogues, because they had refused to carry their prosecutions farther ¶. The people

the popular assemblies as the only cause why these illegal punishments should displease.

* Lib. iii. † PLUT. *de virt. & fort.* ALEX.

‡ DIOD. SIC. lib. xviii, xix. || TIT. LIV. xxxi. xxxiii. xxxiv.

§ DIOD. SIC. lib. xiv ISOCRATES says there were only 5000 banished. He makes the number of those killed amount to 1500. AREOP. ÆSCHINES *contra* CTESIPH. assigns precisely the same number. SENECA. (*de tranq. anim.* cap. v.) says 13000.

¶ DIOD. SIC. lib. xv.

people also in CORCYRA killed 1500 of the nobles, and banished a thousand *. These numbers will appear the more surprising, if we consider the extreme smallness of these states. But all ancient history is full of such instances †.

When ALEXANDER ordered all the exiles to be restored throughout all the cities, it was found, that the whole amounted to 20,000 men ‡; the remains probably of still greater slaughters and massacres. What an astonishing multitude in so narrow a country as ancient GREECE! And what domestic confusion, jealousy, partiality, revenge, heart-burnings, must tear those cities, where factions were wrought up to such a degree of fury and despair!

It would be easier, says ISOCRATES to PHILIP, to raise an army in GREECE at present from the vagabonds than from the cities.

Even when affairs came not to such extremities (which they failed not to do almost in every city twice or thrice every century), property was rendered very precarious by the maxims of ancient government. XENOPHON, in the banquet of SOCRATES, gives us a natural, unaffected description of the tyranny of the ATHENIAN people. "In my poverty," says CHARMIDES, "I am much more happy than I ever was "while possessed of riches; as much as it is happier "to be in security than in terrors, free than a slave, "to receive than to pay court, to be trusted than suspected. Formerly I was obliged to caress every "informer; some imposition was continually laid upon "me; and it was never allowed me to travel, or be "absent from the city. At present, when I am poor, "I look big, and threaten others. The rich are afraid "of me, and show every kind of civility and respect; "and I am become a kind of tyrant in the city ||."

In one of the pleadings of LYSIAS §, the orator very coolly

* DIOD. SIC. lib. xiii. † See NOTE [BB].
‡ DIOD. SIC. lib. xviii.
|| Pag. 885. *ex edit.* LEUNCLAV.
§ *Orat.* 29. *in* NICOM.

coolly ſpeaks of it, by the bye, as a maxim of the ATHENIAN people, that, whenever they wanted money, they put to death ſome of the rich citizens as well as ſtrangers, for the ſake of the forfeiture. In mentioning this, he ſeems not to have any intention of blaming them; ſtill leſs of provoking them, who were his audience and judges.

Whether a man was a citizen or a ſtranger among that people, it ſeems indeed requiſite, either that he ſhould impoveriſh himſelf, or that the people would impoveriſh him, and perhaps kill him into the bargain. The orator laſt mentioned gives a pleaſant account of an eſtate laid out in the public ſervice*; that is, above the third of it in raree-ſhows and figured dances.

I need not inſiſt on the GREEK tyrannies, which were altogether horrible. Even the mixed monarchies, by which moſt of the ancient ſtates of GREECE were governed, before the introduction of republics, were very unſettled. Scarcely any city but ATHENS, ſays ISOCRATES, could ſhow a ſucceſſion of kings for four or five generations†.

Beſides many other obvious reaſons for the inſtability of ancient monarchies, the equal diviſion of property among the brothers in private families, muſt, by a neceſſary conſequence, contribute to unſettle and diſturb the ſtate. The univerſal preference given to the elder by modern laws, though it encreaſes the inequality of fortunes, has, however, this good effect, that it accuſtoms men to the ſame idea in public ſucceſſion, and cuts off all claim and pretenſion of the younger.

The new ſettled colony of HERACLEA, falling immediately into faction, applied to SPARTA, who ſent HERIPIDAS with full authority to quiet their diſſentions. This man, not provoked by any oppoſition, not inflamed by party rage, knew no better expedient

* See NOTE [CC].

† Panath.

than immediately putting to death about 500 of the citizens*. A ſtrong proof how deeply rooted theſe violent maxims of government were throughout all GREECE.

If ſuch was the diſpoſition of mens minds among that refined people, what may be expected in the commonwealths of ITALY, AFRIC, SPAIN, and GAUL, which were denominated barbarous? Why otherwiſe did the GREEKS ſo much value themſelves on their humanity, gentleneſs, and moderation, above all other nations? This reaſoning ſeems very natural; but unluckily the hiſtory of the ROMAN commonwealth in its earlier times, if we give credit to the received accounts, preſents an oppoſite concluſion. No blood was ever ſhed in any ſedition at ROME, till the murder of the GRACCHI. DIONYSIUS HALICARNASSÆUS†, obſerving the ſingular humanity of the ROMAN people in this particular, makes uſe of it as an argument, that they were originally of GRECIAN extraction: whence we may conclude, that the factions and revolutions in the barbarous republics were uſually more violent than even thoſe of GREECE above mentioned.

If the ROMANS were ſo late in coming to blows, they made ample compenſation after they had once entered upon the bloody ſcene; and APPIAN'S hiſtory of their civil wars contains the moſt frightful picture of maſſacres, proſcriptions, and forfeitures, that ever was preſented to the world. What pleaſes moſt in that hiſtorian, is, that he ſeems to feel a proper reſentment of theſe barbarous proceedings; and talks not with that provoking coolneſs and indifference, which cuſtom had produced in many of the GREEK hiſtorians‡.

The maxims of ancient politics contain, in general, ſo little humanity and moderation, that it ſeems ſuperfluous to give any particular reaſon for the acts of violence

* DIOD. SIC. lib. xix.
† Lib. 1.
‡ See NOTE [DD].

violence committed at any particular period. Yet I cannot forbear obſerving, that the laws, in the later period of the ROMAN commonwealth, were ſo abſurdly contrived, that they obliged the heads of parties to have recourſe to theſe extremities. All capital puniſhments were aboliſhed: However criminal, or, what is more, however dangerous, any citizen might be, he could not regularly be puniſhed otherwiſe than by baniſhment: And it became neceſſary, in the revolutions of party, to draw the ſword of private vengeance; nor was it eaſy, when laws were once violated, to ſet bounds to theſe ſanguinary proceedings. Had BRUTUS himſelf prevailed over the *triumvirate*, could he, in common prudence, have allowed OCTAVIUS and ANTHONY to live, and have contented himſelf with baniſhing them to RHODES or MARSEILLES, where they might ſtill have plotted new commotions and rebellions? His executing C. ANTONIUS, brother to the *triumvir*, ſhows evidently his ſenſe of the matter. Did not CICERO, with the approbation of all the wiſe and virtuous of ROME, arbitrarily put to death CATALINE'S accomplices, contrary to law, and without any trial or form of proceſs? and if he moderated his executions, did it not proceed, either from the clemency of his temper, or the conjunctures of the times? A wretched ſecurity in a government which pretends to laws and liberty!

Thus one extreme produces another. In the ſame manner as exceſſive ſeverity in the laws is apt to beget great relaxation in their execution; ſo their exceſſive lenity naturally produces cruelty and barbarity. It is dangerous to force us, in any caſe, to paſs their ſacred boundaries.

One general cauſe of the diſorders, ſo frequent in all ancient governments, ſeems to have conſiſted in the great difficulty of eſtabliſhing any Ariſtocracy in thoſe ages, and the perpetual diſcontents and ſeditions of the people, whenever even the meaneſt and moſt beggarly were excluded from the legiſlature, and from public

public offices. The very quality of *freemen* gave such a rank, being opposed to that of slave, that it seemed to intitle the possessor to every power and privilege of the commonwealth. SOLON's* laws excluded no freeman from votes or elections, but confined some magistracies to a particular *census;* yet were the people never satisfied till those laws were repealed. By the treaty with ANTIPATER†, no ATHENIAN was allowed a vote whose *census* was less than 2000 *drachmas* (about 60 *l. Sterling*). And though such a government would to us appear sufficiently democratical, it was so disagreeable to that people, that above two-thirds of them immediately left their country‡. CASSANDER reduced that *census* to the half‖; yet still the government was considered as an oligarchical tyranny, and the effect of foreign violence.

SERVIUS TULLIUS's§ laws seem equal and reasonable, by fixing the power in proportion to the property: Yet the ROMAN people could never be brought quietly to submit to them.

In those days there was no medium between a severe, jealous Aristocracy, ruling over discontented subjects; and a turbulent, factious, tyrannical Democracy. At present, there is not one republic in EUROPE, from one extremity of it to the other, that is not remarkable for justice, lenity, and stability, equal to, or even beyond MARSEILLES, RHODES, or the most celebrated in antiquity. Almost all of them are well-tempered Aristocracies.

But, *thirdly*, There are many other circumstances, in which ancient nations seem inferior to the modern, both for the happiness and encrease of mankind. Trade, manufactures, industry, were no where, in former ages, so flourishing as they are at present in EUROPE. The only garb of the ancients, both for males and females, seems to have been a kind of flan-

* PLUTARCHUS *in vita* SOLON. † DIOD. SIC. lib. xviii.
‡ Id. ibid. ‖ Id. ibid. § TIT. LIV. lib. i. cap. 43.

nel which they wore commonly white or grey, and which they ſcoured as often as it became dirty. TYRE, which carried on, after CARTHAGE, the greateſt commerce of any city in the MEDITERRANEAN, before it was deſtroyed by ALEXANDER, was no mighty city, if we credit ARRIAN's account of its inhabitants*. ATHENS is commonly ſuppoſed to have been a trading city; but it was as populous before the MEDIAN war as at any time after it, according to HERODOTUS†; yet its commerce, at that time, was ſo inconſiderable, that, as the ſame hiſtorian obſerves‡, even the neighbouring coaſts of ASIA were as little frequented by the GREEKS as the pillars of HERCULES: For beyond theſe he conceived nothing.

Great intereſt of money, and great profits of trade, are an infallible indication, that induſtry and commerce are but in their infancy. We read in LYSIAS‖ of 100 *per cent.* profit made on a cargo of two talents, ſent to no greater diſtance than from ATHENS to the ADRIATIC: Nor is this mentioned as an inſtance of extraordinary profit. ANTIDORUS, ſays DEMOSTHENES§, paid three talents and a half for a houſe which he let at a talent a-year: And the orator blames his own tutors for not employing his money to like advantage. My fortune, ſays he, in eleven years minority, ought to have been tripled. The value of 20 of the ſlaves left by his father, he computes at 40 minas, and the yearly profit of their labour at 12¶. The moſt moderate intereſt at ATHENS (for there was higher ** often paid), was *twelve per cent.* †† and that paid monthly. Not to inſiſt upon the

* Lib. ii. There were 8000 killed during the ſiege; and the captives amounted to 30,000. DIODORUS SICULUS, lib xvii. ſays only 13,000: But he accounts for this ſmall number, by ſaying that the TYRIANS had ſent away before hand part of their wives and children to CARTHAGE.

† Lib. v. he makes the number of the citizens amount to 30,000.

‡ Ib. v. ‖ *Orat.* 33. *adverſ.* DIAGIT.

§ *Contra* APHOB. p. 25. *ex edit.* ALDI.

¶ Id. p. 19. ** Id ibid.

†† Id. ibid. and ÆSCHINES *contra* CTESIPH.

the high intereſt to which the vaſt ſums diſtributed in elections had raiſed money * at ROME, we find, that VERRES, before that factious period, ſtated 24 *per cent.* for money which he left in the hands of the publicans; and though CICERO exclaims againſt this article, it is not on account of the extravagant uſury; but becauſe it had never been cuſtomary to ſtate any intereſt on ſuch occaſions†. Intereſt, indeed, ſunk at ROME after the ſettlement of the empire: But it never remained any conſiderable time ſo low as in the commercial ſtates of modern times‡.

Among the other inconveniences, which the ATHENIANS felt from the fortifying of DACELIA by the LACEDEMONIANS, it is repreſented by THUCYDIDES §, as one of the moſt conſiderable, that they could not bring over their corn from EUBEA by land, paſſing by OROPUS; but were obliged to embark it, and to ſail round the promontory of SUNIUM. A ſurpriſing inſtance of the imperfection of ancient navigation! For the water-carriage is not here above double the land.

I do not remember a paſſage in any ancient author, where the growth of a city is aſcribed to the eſtabliſhment of a manufacture. The commerce, which is ſaid to flouriſh, is chiefly the exchange of thoſe commodities for which different ſoils and climates were ſuited. The ſale of wine and oil into AFRICA, according to DIODORUS SICULUS ||, was the foundation of the riches of AGRIGENTUM. The ſituation of the city of SYBARIS, according to the ſame author ¶, was the cauſe of its immenſe populouſneſs; being built near the two rivers CRATHYS and SYBARIS. But theſe two rivers, we may obſerve, are not navigable; and could only produce ſome fertile vallies, for agriculture and tillage; an advantage ſo

* *Epiſt ad* ATTIC. lib. iv. epiſt. 15.
† *Contra* VERR. *orat.* 3. ‡ See Eſſay IV.
§ Lib. vii.
|| Lib. xiii. ¶ Lib. xii.

inconſiderable, that a modern writer would ſcarcely have taken notice of it.

The barbarity of the ancient tyrants, together with the extreme love of liberty, which animated thoſe ages, muſt have baniſhed every merchant and manufacturer, and have quite depopulated the ſtate, had it ſubſiſted upon induſtry and commerce. While the cruel and ſuſpicious DIONYSIUS was carrying on his butcheries, who, that was not detained by his landed property, and could have carried with him any art or ſkill to procure a ſubſiſtence in other countries, would have remained expoſed to ſuch implacable barbarity? The perſecutions of PHILIP II. and LEWIS XIV. filled all EUROPE with the manufacturers of FLANDERS and of FRANCE.

I grant, that agriculture is the ſpecies of induſtry chiefly requiſite to the ſubſiſtence of multitudes: and it is poſſible, that this induſtry may flouriſh, even where manufactures and other arts are unknown and neglected. SWISSERLAND is at preſent a remarkable inſtance; where we find at once the moſt ſkilful huſbandmen, and the moſt bungling tradeſmen, that are to be met with in EUROPE. That agriculture flouriſhed in GREECE and ITALY, at leaſt in ſome parts of them, and at ſome periods, we have reaſon to preſume: And whether the mechanical arts had reached the ſame degree of perfection, may not be eſteemed ſo material; eſpecially, if we conſider the great equality of riches in the ancient republics, where each family was obliged to cultivate, with the greateſt care and induſtry, its own little field, in order to its ſubſiſtence.

But is it juſt reaſoning, becauſe agriculture may, in ſome inſtances, flouriſh without trade or manufactures, to conclude, that, in any great extent of country, and for any great tract of time, it would ſubſiſt alone? The moſt natural way, ſurely, of encouraging huſbandry, is, firſt to excite other kinds of induſtry, and thereby afford the labourer a ready market

market for his commodities, and a return of ſuch goods as may contribute to his pleaſure and enjoyment. This method is infallible and univerſal; and, as it prevails more in modern government than in the ancient, it affords a preſumption of the ſuperior populouſneſs of the former.

Every man, ſays XENOPHON*, may be a farmer: No art or ſkill is requiſite: All conſiſts in induſtry, and in attention to the execution. A ſtrong proof, as COLUMELLA hints, that agriculture was but little known in the age of XENOPHON.

All our later improvements and refinements, have they done nothing towards the eaſy ſubſiſtence of men, and conſequently towards their propagation and encreaſe? Our ſuperior ſkill in mechanics; the diſcovery of new worlds, by which commerce has been ſo much enlarged; the eſtabliſhment of poſts; and the uſe of bills of exchange: Theſe ſeem all extremely uſeful to the encouragement of art, induſtry, and populouſneſs. Were we to ſtrike off theſe, what a check ſhould we give to every kind of buſineſs and labour, and what multitudes of families would immediately periſh from want and hunger? And it ſeems not probable, that we could ſupply the place of theſe new inventions by any other regulation or inſtitution.

Have we reaſon to think, that the police of ancient ſtates was any wiſe comparable to that of modern, or that men had then equal ſecurity, either at home, or in their journeys by land or water? I queſtion not, but every impartial examiner would give us the preference in this particular†.

Thus, upon comparing the whole, it ſeems impoſſible to aſſign any juſt reaſon, why the world ſhould have been more populous in ancient than in modern times. The equality of property among the ancients, liberty, and the ſmall diviſions of their ſtates, were indeed circumſtances favourable to the propagation

* Oecon. † See Part I. Eſſay XI.

of mankind: But their wars were more bloody and deſtructive, their governments more factious and unſettled, commerce and manufactures more feeble and languiſhing, and the general police more looſe and irregular. Theſe latter diſadvantages ſeem to form a ſufficient counterbalance to the former advantages; and rather favour the oppoſite opinion to that which commonly prevails with regard to this ſubject.

But there is no reaſoning, it may be ſaid, againſt matter of fact. If it appear, that the world was then more populous than at preſent, we may be aſſured, that our conjectures are falſe, and that we have overlooked ſome material circumſtance in the compariſon. This I readily own: All our preceding reaſonings, I acknowledge to be mere trifling, or, at leaſt, ſmall ſkirmiſhes and frivolous rencounters, which decide nothing. But unluckily the main combat, where we compare facts, cannot be rendered much more deciſive. The facts delivered by ancient authors, are either ſo uncertain or ſo imperfect, as to afford us nothing poſitive in this matter. How indeed could it be otherwiſe? The very facts which we muſt oppoſe to them, in computing the populouſneſs of modern ſtates, are far from being either certain or complete. Many grounds of calculation proceeded on by celebrated writers, are little better than thoſe of the Emperor HELIOGABALUS, who formed an eſtimate of the immenſe greatneſs of ROME, from ten thouſand pound weight of cobwebs which had been found in that city*.

It is to be remarked, that all kinds of numbers are uncertain in ancient manuſcripts, and have been ſubject to much greater corruptions than any other part of the text; and that for an obvious reaſon. Any alteration, in other places, commonly affects the ſenſe or grammar, and is more readily perceived by the reader and tranſcriber.

Few enumerations of inhabitants have been made of

* ÆLII LAMPRID. *in vita* HELIOGAB. cap. 26.

of any tract of country by any ancient author of good authority, ſo as to afford us a large enough view for compariſon.

It is probable, that there was formerly a good foundation for the number of citizens aſſigned to any free city; becauſe they entered for a ſhare in the government, and there were exact regiſters kept of them. But as the number of ſlaves is ſeldom mentioned, this leaves us in as great uncertainty as ever, with regard to the populouſneſs even of ſingle cities.

The firſt page of THUCYDIDES is, in my opinion, the commencement of real hiſtory. All preceding narrations are ſo intermixed with fable, that philoſophers ought to abandon them, in a great meaſure, to the embelliſhment of poets and orators *.

With regard to remote times, the numbers of people aſſigned are often ridiculous, and loſe all credit and authority. The free citizens of SYBARIS, able to bear arms, and actually drawn out in battle, were 300,000. They encountered at SIAGRA with 100,000 citizens of CROTONA, another GREEK city contiguous to them; and were defeated. This is DIODORUS SICULUS's † account, and is very ſeriouſly inſiſted on by that hiſtorian. STRABO ‡ alſo mentions the ſame number of SYBARITES.

DIODORUS SICULUS ||, enumerating the inhabitants of AGRIGENTUM, when it was deſtroyed by the CARTHAGINIANS, ſays, that they amounted to 20,000 citizens, 200,000 ſtrangers, beſides ſlaves, who in ſo opulent a city as he repreſents it, would probably be, at leaſt, as numerous. We muſt remark, that the women and the children are not included; and that therefore, upon the whole, this city muſt have contained near two millions of inhabitants §. And what was the reaſon of ſo immenſe an encreaſe! They

* See NOTE [EE].

† Lib. xii. ‡ Lib. vi. || Lib. xiii.

§ DIOGENES LAERTIUS (*in vita* EMPEDOCLIS) ſays, that AGRIGENTUM contained only 800,000 inhabitants.

were induſtrious in cultivating the neighbouring fields, not exceeding a ſmall ENGLISH country; and they traded with their wine and oil to AFRICA, which, at that time, produced none of theſe commodities.

PTOLEMY, ſays THEOCRITUS*, commands 33,339 cities. I ſuppoſe the ſingularity of the number was the reaſon of aſſigning it. DIODORUS SICULUS† aſſigns three millions of inhabitants to ÆGYPT, a ſmall number: But then he makes the number of cities amount to 18,000: An evident contradiction.

He ſays‡, the people were formerly ſeven millions. Thus remote times are always moſt envied and admired.

That XERXES's army was extremely numerous, I can readily believe; both from the great extent of his empire, and from the practice among the eaſtern nations, of encumbering their camp with a ſuperfluous multitude: But will any rational man cite HERODOTUS's wonderful narrations as an authority? There is ſomething very rational, I own, in LYSIAS's‖ argument upon this ſubject. Had not XERXES's army been incredibly numerous, ſays he, he had never made a bridge over the HELLESPONT: It had been much eaſier to have tranſported his men over ſo ſhort a paſſage, with the numerous ſhipping of which he was maſter.

POLYBIUS§ ſays, that the ROMANS, between the firſt and ſecond PUNIC wars, being threatened with an invaſion from the GAULS, muſtered all their own forces, and thoſe of their allies, and found them amount to ſeven hundred thouſand men able to bear arms: A great number ſurely, and which when joined to the ſlaves, is probably not leſs, if not rather more, than that extent of country affords at preſent¶.

The

* Idyll. 17. † Lib. i. ‡ Idyll. 17.
‖ *Orat. funebris.* § Lib. ii.

¶ The country that ſupplied this number, was not above a third of ITALY, viz. the Pope's dominions, TUSCANY, and a part of the kingdom of NAPLES: But perhaps in thoſe early times there were very few ſlaves, except in ROME or the great cities.

The enumeration too, seems to have been made with some exactness; and POLYBIUS gives us the detail of the particulars. But might not the number be magnified, in order to encourage the people?

DIODORUS SICULUS* makes the same enumeration amount to near a million. These variations are suspicious. He plainly too supposes, that ITALY in his time was not so populous: Another suspicious circumstance. For who can believe, that the inhabitants of that country diminished from the time of the first PUNIC war to that of the *triumvirates?*

JULIUS CÆSAR, according to APPIAN†, encountered four millions of GAULS, killed one million, and made another million prisoners‡. Supposing the number of the enemy's army and that of the slain could be exactly assigned, which never is possible; how could it be known how often the same man returned into the armies, or how distinguish the new from the old levied soldiers? No attention ought ever to be given to such loose, exaggerated calculations; especially where the author does not tell us the mediums upon which the calculations were founded.

PATERCULUS‖ makes the number of GAULS killed by CÆSAR amount only to 400,000. A more probable account, and more easily reconciled to the history of these wars given by that conqueror himself in his Commentaries§. The most bloody of his battles were fought against the HELVETII and the GERMANS.

One would imagine, that every circumstance of the life and actions of DIONYSIUS the elder might be regarded as authentic, and free from all fabulous exaggeration; both because he lived at a time when letters flourished most in GREECE, and because his chief

* Lib. ii. † CELTICA.

‡ PLUTARCH (*in vita* CÆS.) makes the numbers that CÆSAR fought with amount to three millions; JULIAN (*in* CÆSARIBUS) to two. ‖ Lib. ii. cap. 47.

§ See NOTE [FF].

chief hiſtorian was PHILISTUS, a man allowed to be of great genius, and who was a courtier and miniſter of that prince. But can we admit, that he had a ſtanding army of 100,000 foot, 10,000 horſe, and a fleet of 400 gallies*? Theſe, we may obſerve, were mercenary forces, and ſubſiſted upon pay, like our armies in EUROPE. For the citizens were all diſarmed; and when DION afterwards invaded SICILY, and called on his countrymen to vindicate their liberty, he was obliged to bring arms along with him, which he diſtributed among thoſe who joined him†. In a ſtate where agriculture alone flouriſhes, there may be many inhabitants; and if theſe be all armed and diſciplined, a great force may be called out upon occaſion: But great bodies of mercenary troops can never be maintained, without either great trade and numerous manufactures, or extenſive dominions. The United Provinces never were maſters of ſuch a force by ſea and land as that which is ſaid to belong to DIONYSIUS; yet they poſſeſs as large a territory, perfectly well cultivated, and have much more reſources from their commerce and induſtry. DIODORUS SICULUS allows, that, even in his time, the army of DIONYSIUS appeared incredible; that is, as I interpret it, was entirely a fiction; and the opinion aroſe from the exaggerated flattery of the courtiers, and perhaps from the vanity and policy of the tyrant himſelf.

It is a uſual fallacy, to conſider all the ages of antiquity as one period, and to compute the numbers contained in the great cities mentioned by ancient authors, as if theſe cities had been all cotemporary. The GREEK colonies flouriſhed extremely in SICILY during the age of ALEXANDER: But in AUGUSTUS's time they were ſo decayed, that almoſt all the produce of that fertile iſland was conſumed in ITALY‡.

Let us now examine the numbers of inhabitants aſſigned

* DIOD. SIC. lib. ii.
† PLUTARCH *in vita* DIONYS.
‡ STRABO, lib. vi.

assigned to particular cities in antiquity; and omitting the numbers of NINEVEH, BABYLON, and the EGYPTIAN THEBES, let us confine ourselves to the sphere of real history, to the GRECIAN and ROMAN states. I must own, the more I consider this subject, the more am I inclined to scepticism, with regard to the great populousness ascribed to ancient times.

ATHENS is said by PLATO* to be a very great city; and it was surely the greatest of all the GREEK† cities except SYRACUSE, which was nearly about the same size in THUCYDIDES's‡ time, and afterwards encreased beyond it. For CICERO‖ mentions it as the greatest of all the GREEK cities in his time; not comprehending, I suppose, either ANTIOCH or ALEXANDRIA under that denomination. ATHENÆUS§ says, that, by the enumeration of DEMETRIUS PHALEREUS, there were in ATHENS 21,000 citizens, 10,000 strangers, and 400,000 slaves. This number is much insisted on by those whose opinion I call in question, and is esteemed a fundamental fact to their purpose: But, in my opinion, there is no point of criticism more certain, than that ATHENÆUS and CTESICLES, whom he quotes, are here mistaken, and that the number of slaves is, at least, augmented by a whole cypher, and ought not to be regarded as more than 40,000.

First, When the number of citizens is said to be 21,000 by ATHENÆUS¶, men of full age are only understood. For, (1.) HERODOTUS says** that ARISTA-

* *Apolog.* SOCR.

† ARGOS seems also to have been a great city; for LYSIAS contents himself with saying that it did not exceed ATHENS. Orat. 34.

‡ Lib. vi. See also PLUTARCH *in vita* NICIÆ.

‖ *Orat. contra* VERREM, lib. iv. cap. 52. STRABO, lib. vi. says, it was twenty-two miles in compass. But then we are to consider, that it contained two harbours within it; one of which was a very large one, and might be regarded as a kind of bay.

§ Lib. vi. cap. 20.

¶ DEMOSTHENES assigns 20,000; *contra* ARISTAG.

** Lib. v.

ARISTAGORAS, ambaſſador from the IONIANS, found it harder to deceive one SPARTAN than 30,000 ATHENIANS; meaning, in a looſe way, the whole ſtate, ſuppoſed to be met in one popular aſſembly, excluding the women and children. (2.) THUCYDIDES* ſays, that, making allowance for all the abſentees in the fleet, army, garriſons, and for people employed in their private affairs, the ATHENIAN aſſembly never roſe to five thouſand. (3.) The forces enumerated by the ſame hiſtorian†, being all citizens, and amounting to 13,000 heavy-armed infantry, prove the ſame method of calculation; as alſo the whole tenor of the GREEK hiſtorians, who always underſtand men of full age, when they aſſign the number of citizens in any republic. Now, theſe being but the fourth of the inhabitants, the free ATHENIANS were by this account 84,000; the ſtrangers 40,000; and the ſlaves, calculating by the ſmaller number, and allowing that they married and propagated at the ſame rate with freemen, were 160,000; and the whole of the inhabitants 284,000: A number ſurely large enough. The other number, 1,720,000, makes ATHENS larger than LONDON and PARIS united.

Secondly. There were but 10,000 houſes in ATHENS‡.

Thirdly, Though the extent of the walls, as given us by THUCYDIDES‖, be great (to wit, eighteen miles, beſide the ſea-coaſt); yet XENOPHON§ ſays, there was much waſte ground within the walls. They ſeem indeed to have joined four diſtinct and ſeparate cities¶.

Fourthly, No inſurrection of the ſlaves, or ſuſpicion of inſurrection, is ever mentioned by hiſtorians; except one commotion of the miners**.

Fifthly, The treatment of ſlaves by the ATHENIANS is

* Lib. viii.
† Lib. ii. DIODORUS SICULUS's account perfectly agrees, lib. xii.
‡ XENOPHON *Mem.* lib. ii. ‖ Lib. ii. § *De ratione red.*
¶ See NOTE [GG]. ** ATHEN. lib. vi.

is ſaid by XENOPHON* and DEMOSTHENES†, and PLAUTUS‡, to have been extremely gentle and indulgent: Which could never have been the caſe, had the diſproportion been twenty to one. The diſproportion is not ſo great in any of our colonies; yet are we obliged to exerciſe a rigorous military government over the negroes.

Sixthly, No man is ever eſteemed rich for poſſeſſing what may be reckoned an equal diſtribution of property in any country, or even triple or quadruple that wealth. Thus every perſon in ENGLAND is computed by ſome to ſpend ſixpence a-day: Yet is he eſteemed but poor who has five times that ſum. Now TIMARCHUS is ſaid by ÆSCHINES‖ to have been left in eaſy circumſtances; but he was maſter only of ten ſlaves employed in manufactures. LYSIAS and his brother, two ſtrangers, were proſcribed by the thirty for their great riches; though they had but ſixty a-piece§. DEMOSTHENES was left very rich by his father, yet he had no more than fifty-two ſlaves¶. His workhouſe of twenty cabinet-makers, is ſaid to be a very conſiderable manufactory**.

Seventhly, During the DECELIAN war, as the GREEK hiſtorians call it, 20,000 ſlaves deſerted, and brought the ATHENIANS to great diſtreſs, as we learn from THUCYDIDES††. This could not have happened, had they been only the twentieth part. The beſt ſlaves would not deſert.

Eighthly, XENOPHON‡‡ propoſes a ſcheme for maintaining by the public 10,000 ſlaves: And that ſo great a number may poſſibly be ſupported, any one will be convinced, ſays he, who conſiders the numbers we poſſeſſed before the DECELIAN war. A way of ſpeaking altogether incompatible with the larger number of ATHENÆUS.

Ninthly,

* *De rep.* ATHEN.
‖ *Contra* TIMARCH.
¶ *Contra* APHOB.
†† Lib. vii.
† PHILIP. 3.
§ *Orat.* 11.
** Ibid.
‡‡ *De rat. red.*
‡ STICHO.

Ninthly, The whole *cenſus* of the ſtate of ATHENS was leſs than 6000 talents. And though numbers in ancient manuſcripts be often ſuſpected by critics, yet this is unexceptionable; both becauſe DEMOSTHENES *, who gives it, gives alſo the detail, which checks him; and becauſe POLYBIUS † aſſigns the ſame number, and reaſons upon it. Now, the moſt vulgar ſlave could yield by his labour an *obolus* a-day, over and above his maintenance, as we learn from XENOPHON ‡, who ſays, that NICIAS's overſeer paid his maſter ſo much for ſlaves whom he employed in mines. If you will take the pains to eſtimate an *obolus* a-day, and the ſlaves at 400,000, computing only at four years purchaſe, you will find the ſum above 12,000 talents; even though allowance be made for the great number of holidays in ATHENS. Beſides, many of the ſlaves would have a much greater value from their art. The loweſt that DEMOSTHENES eſtimates any of his ‖ father's ſlaves is two minas a-head. And upon this ſuppoſition, it is a little difficult, I confeſs, to reconcile even the number of 40,000 ſlaves with the *cenſus* of 6000 talents.

Tenthly, CHIOS is ſaid by THUCYDIDES § to contain more ſlaves than any GREEK city, except SPARTA. SPARTA then had more than ATHENS, in proportion to the number of citizens. The Spartans were 9000 in the town, 30,000 in the country ¶. The male ſlaves, therefore, of full age, muſt have been more than 78,000; the whole more than 3,120,000. A number impoſſible to be maintained in a narrow barren country, ſuch as LACONIA, which had no trade. Had the HELOTES been ſo very numerous, the murder of 2000 mentioned by THUCYDIDES **, would have irritated them, without weakening them.

Beſides, we are to conſider, that the number aſſigned

* *De claſſibus.* † Lib. ii. cap. 62.
‡ *De rat. red.* ‖ *Contra.* APHOBUM. § Lib. viii.
¶ PLUTARCH *in vita* LYCURG. ** Lib iv.

ed by ATHENÆUS *, whatever it is, comprehends all the inhabitants of ATTICA, as well as thoſe of ATHENS. The ATHENIANS affected much a country life, as we learn from THUCYDIDES †; and when they were all chaſed into town, by the invaſion of their territory during the PELOPONESIAN war, the city was not able to contain them; and they were obliged to lie in the porticoes, temples, and even ſtreets, for want of lodging ‡.

The ſame remark is to be extended to all the other GREEK cities; and when the number of citizens is aſſigned, we muſt always underſtand it to comprehend the inhabitants of the neighbouring country, as well as of the city. Yet, even with this allowance, it muſt be confeſſed, that GREECE was a populous country, and exceeded what we could imagine concerning ſo narrow a territory, naturally not very fertile, and which drew no ſupplies of corn from other places. For, excepting ATHENS, which traded to PONTUS for that commodity, the other cities ſeem to have ſubſiſted chiefly from their neighbouring territory ‖.

RHODES is well known to have been a city of extenſive commerce, and of great fame and ſplendor; yet it contained only 6000 citizens able to bear arms, when it was beſieged by DEMETRIUS §.

THEBES was always one of the capital cities of GREECE ¶: But the number of its citizens exceeded not thoſe of RHODES **. PHLIASIA is ſaid to be a ſmall city by XENOPHON††; yet we find that it contained 6000 citizens ‡‡. I pretend not to reconcile theſe two facts. Perhaps, XENOPHON calls PHLIASIA

3 a

* The ſame author affirms, that CORINTH had once 460,000 ſlaves; ÆGINA 470,000. But the foregoing arguments hold ſtronger againſt theſe facts, which are indeed entirely abſurd and impoſſible. It is however remarkable, that ATHENÆUS cites ſo great an authority as ARISTOTLE for this laſt fact: And the ſcholiaſt on PINDAR mentions the ſame number of ſlaves in ÆGINA.

†Lib. ii. ‡ THUCYD. lib. ii. ‖ See NOTE [HH].
§ DIOD. SIC. lib. xx. ¶ ISOCR. *paneg.*
** See NOTE [II].
†† Hiſt. GRÆC. lib. vii. ‡‡ Id. lib. vii.

a small town, because it made but a small figure in GREECE, and maintained only a subordinate alliance with SPARTA; or perhaps the country, belonging to it, was extensive, and most of the citizens were employed in the cultivation of it, and dwelt in the neighbouring villages.

MANTINEA was equal to any city in ARCADIA *: Consequently it was equal to MEGALOPOLIS, which was fifty stadia, or six miles and a quarter in circumference †. But MANTINEA had only 3000 citizens ‡. The GREEK cities, therefore, contained often fields and gardens, together with the houses; and we cannot judge of them by the extent of their walls. ATHENS contained no more than 10,000 houses; yet its walls, with the sea-coast, were above twenty miles in extent. SYRACUSE was twenty-two miles in circumference; yet was scarcely ever spoken of by the ancients as more populous than ATHENS. BABYLON was a square of fifteen miles, or sixty miles in circuit; but it contained large cultivated fields and inclosures, as we learn from PLINY. Though AURELIAN'S wall was fifty miles in circumference ||, the circuit of all the thirteen divisions of ROME, taken apart, according to PUBLIUS VICTOR, was only about forty-three miles. When an enemy invaded the country, all the inhabitants retired within the walls of the ancient cities, with their cattle and furniture, and instruments of husbandry: and the great height to which the walls were raised, enabled a small number to defend them with facility.

SPARTA, says XENOPHON §, is one of the cities of GREECE that has the fewest inhabitants. Yet POLYBIUS ¶ says, that it was forty-eight stadia in circumference, and was round.

* POLYB lib. ii.

† POLYB. lib. ix. cap. 20

‡ LYSIAS, orat. 34.

|| VOPISCUS *in vita* AUREL.

§ *De rep.* LACED. This passage is not easily reconciled with that of PLUTARCH above, who says, that SPARTA had 9000 citizens.

¶ POLYB. lib. ix. cap. 20.

All the ÆTOLIANS able to bear arms in ANTIPATER's time, deducting ſome few garriſons, were but ten thouſand men †.

POLYBIUS ‡ tells us, that the ACHÆAN league might, without any inconvenience, march 30 or 40,000 men: And this account ſeems probable: For that league comprehended the greater part of PELOPONNESUS. Yet PAUSANIAS §, ſpeaking of the ſame period, ſays, that all the ACHÆANS able to bear arms, even when ſeveral manumitted ſlaves were joined to them, did not amount to fifteen thouſand.

The THESSALIANS, till their final conqueſt by the ROMANS, were in all ages, turbulent, factious, ſeditious, diſorderly ‖. It is not therefore natural to ſuppoſe, that this part of GREECE abounded much in people.

We are told by THUCYDIDES ¶, that the part of PELOPONNESUS, adjoining to PYLUS, was deſart and uncultivated. HERODOTUS ſays **, that MACEDONIA was full of lions and wild bulls; animals which can only inhabit vaſt unpeopled foreſts. Theſe were the two extremities of GREECE.

All the inhabitants of EPIRUS, of all ages, ſexes, and conditions, who were ſold by PAULUS ÆMILIUS, amounted only to 150,000 ††. Yet EPIRUS might be double the extent of YORKSHIRE.

JUSTIN * tells us, that when PHILIP of MACEDON was declared head of the GREEK confederacy, he called a congreſs of all the ſtates, except the LACEDEMONIANS, who refuſed to concur; and he found the force of the whole, upon computation, to amount to 200,000 infantry, and 15,000 cavalry. This muſt be underſtood to be all the citizens capable of bearing arms.

† DIOD. SIC. lib. xviii.
‡ LEGAT. § *In* ACHAICIS.
‖ TIT. LIV. lib. xxiv. cap. 51. PLATO *in* CRITONE.
¶ Lib. vii. ** Lib. vii.
†† TIT. LIV. lib. xlv. cap. 34. * Lib. ix. cap. 5.

For as the GREEK republics maintained no mercenary forces, and had no militia distinct from the whole body of the citizens, it is not conceivable what other medium there could be of computation. That such an army could ever, by GREECE, be brought into the field, and be maintained there, is contrary to all history. Upon this supposition, therefore, we may thus reason. The free GREEKS of all ages and sexes were 860,000. The slaves, estimating them by the number of ATHENIAN slaves as above, who seldom married or had families, were double the male citizens of full age, to wit, 430,000: And all the inhabitants of ancient GREECE, excepting LACONIA, were about one million two hundred and ninety thousand: No mighty number, nor exceeding what may be found at present in SCOTLAND, a country of not much greater extent, and very indifferently peopled.

We may now consider the numbers of people in ROME and ITALY, and collect all the lights afforded us by scattered passages in ancient authors. We shall find, upon the whole, a great difficulty in fixing any opinion on that head; and no reason to support those exaggerated calculations so much insisted on by modern writers.

DIONYSIUS HALICARNASSÆUS * says, that the ancient walls of ROME were nearly of the same compass with those of ATHENS, but that the suburbs ran out to a great extent; and it was difficult to tell where the town ended, or the country began. In some places of ROME, it appears from the same author*, from JUVENAL †, and from other ancient writers‡, that the houses were high, and families lived in separate storeys, one above another: But it is probable, that these were only the poorer citizens, and only in some few streets. If we may judge from the younger PLINY's § account of his own house, and from

* Lib. iv. † Lib. x. † Satyr. iii. l. 269, 270.

‡ See NOTE [KK]. § See NOTE [LL].

from BARTOLI's plans of ancient buildings, the men of quality had very ſpacious palaces; and their buildings were like the CHINESE houſes at this day, where each apartment is ſeparated from the reſt, and riſes no higher than a ſingle ſtorey. To which if we add, that the ROMAN nobility much affected extenſive porticoes, and even woods ‖ in town; we may perhaps allow VOSSIUS (though there is no manner of reaſon for it) to read the famous paſſage of the elder PLINY ¶ his own way, without admitting the extravagant conſequences which he draws from it.

The number of citizens who received corn by the public diſtribution in the time of AUGUSTUS, were two hundred thouſand **. This one would eſteem a pretty certain ground of calculation; Yet it is attended with ſuch circumſtances as throw us back into doubt and uncertainty.

Did the poorer citizens only receive the diſtribution? It was calculated, to be ſure, chiefly for their benefit. But it appears from a paſſage in CICERO ††, that the rich might alſo take their portion, and that it was eſteemed no reproach in them to apply for it.

To whom was the corn given; whether only to heads of families, or to every man, woman, and child? The portion every month was five *modii* to each * (about $\frac{5}{6}$ of a buſhel). This was too little for a family, and too much for an individual. A very accurate antiquary †, therefore, infers, that it was given to every man of full age; but he allows the matter to be uncertain.

Was it ſtrictly enquired, whether the claimant lived within the precincts of ROME; or was it ſufficient,

‖ VITRUV. lib. v. cap. 11. TACIT. annal. lib. xi. cap. 3. SUETON. *in vita* OCTAV. cap. 72, &c.

¶ See NOTE [MM].

** *Ex monument. Ancyr.* †† *Tuſc. Queſt.* lib. iii. cap. 48

* *Licinius apud Salluſt. hiſt. frag.* lib. iii.

† *Nicolaus Hortenſius de re frumentaria Roman.*

that he presented himself at the monthly distribution? This last seems more probable‖.

Were there no false claimants? We are told§, that CÆSAR struck off at once 170,000, who had creeped in without a just title; and it is very little probable that he remedied all abuses.

But, lastly, what proportion of slaves must we assign to these citizens? This is the most material question, and the most uncertain. It is very doubtful, whether ATHENS can be established as a rule for ROME. Perhaps the ATHENIANS had more slaves, because they employed them in manufactures, for which a capital city like ROME seems not so proper. Perhaps, on the other hand, the ROMANS had more slaves, on account of their superior luxury and riches.

There were exact bills of mortality kept at ROME; but no ancient author has given us the number of burials, except SUETONIUS*, who tells us, that in one season, there were 30,000 names carried to the temple of LIBITINA; but this was during a plague which can afford no certain foundation for any inference.

The public corn, though distributed only to 200,000 citizens, affected very considerably the whole agriculture of ITALY†: A fact no wise reconcileable to some modern exaggerations with regard to the inhabitants of that country.

The best ground of conjecture I can find concerning the greatness of ancient ROME, is this: We are told by HERODIAN‡, that ANTIOCH and ALEXANDRIA were very little inferior to ROME. It appears from

‖ Not to take the people too much from their business, AUGUSTUS ordained the distribution of corn to be made only thrice a-year: But the people, finding the monthly distributions more convenient (as preserving, I suppose, a more regular œconomy in their family), desired to have them restored. SUETON. AUGUST. cap. 40. Had not some of the people come from some distance for their corn, AUGUSTUS's precaution seems superfluous.

§ *Sueton. in Jul.* cap. 41.

* *In vita Neronis.* † *Sueton. Aug.* cap. 42. ‡ Lib. iv. cap. 5.

from DIODORUS SICULUS §, that one ſtraight ſtreet of ALEXANDRIA, reaching from gate to gate, was five miles long; and as ALEXANDRIA was much more extended in length than breadth, it ſeems to have been a city nearly of the bulk of PARIS ‖; and ROME might be about the ſize of LONDON.

There lived in ALEXANDRIA, in DIODORUS SICULUS's time ¶, 300,000 free people, comprehending, I ſuppoſe, women and children**. But what number of ſlaves? Had we any juſt ground to fix theſe at an equal number with the free inhabitants, it would favour the foregoing computation.

There is a paſſage in HERODIAN, which is a little ſurpriſing. He ſays poſitively, that the palace of the Emperor was as large as all the reſt of the city*. This was NERO's golden houſe, which is indeed repreſented by SUETONIUS † and PLINY as of an enormous extent ‡; but no power of imagination can make us conceive it to bear any proportion to ſuch a city as LONDON.

We may obſerve, had the hiſtorian been relating NERO's extravagance, and had he made uſe of ſuch an expreſſion, it would have had much leſs weight; Theſe rhetorical exaggerations being ſo apt to creep into an author's ſtyle, even when the moſt chaſte and correct. But it is mentioned by HERODIAN only by the bye, in relating the quarrels between GETA and CARACALLA.

It appears from the ſame hiſtorian §, that there was then much land uncultivated, and put to no manner of uſe; and he aſcribes it as a great praiſe to PERTINAX,

§ Lib. xvii. ‖ See NOTE [NN]. ¶ Lib. xvii.

** He ſays ἐλευθέροι, not πολῖται, which laſt expreſſion muſt have been underſtood of citizens alone, and grown men.

*Lib. iv. cap. 1. πάσης πόλεως. POLITIAN interprets it "ædibus "majoribus etiam reliqua urbe."

† See NOTE [OO].

‡ PLINIUS, lib. xxxvi. cap. 15. "Bis vidimus urbem totam "cingi domibus principum, CAII ac NERONIS."

§ Lib. ii. cap 15.

TINAX, that he allowed every one to take ſuch land either in ITALY or elſewhere, and cultivate it as he pleaſed, without paying any taxes. *Lands uncultivated, and put to no manner of uſe!* This is not heard of in any part of CHRISTENDOM, except in ſome remote parts of HUNGARY, as I have been informed. And it ſurely correſponds very ill with that idea of the extreme populouſneſs of antiquity ſo much inſiſted on.

We learn from VOPISCUS*, that there was even in ETRURIA much fertile land uncultivated, which the Emperor AURELIAN intended to convert into vineyards, in order to furniſh the ROMAN people with a gratuitous diſtribution of wine; a very proper expedient for depopulating ſtill farther that capital, and all the neighbouring territories.

It may not be amiſs to take notice of the account which POLYBIUS† gives of the great herds of ſwine to be met with in TUSCANY and LOMBARDY, as well as in GREECE, and of the method of feeding them which was then practiſed. "There are great herds "of ſwine" ſays he, "throughout all ITALY, par- "ticularly in former times, through ETRURIA and "CISALPINE GAUL. And a herd frequently con- "ſiſts of a thouſand or more ſwine. When one of "theſe herds in feeding meets with another, they "mix together; and the ſwine-herds have no other "expedient for ſeparating them than to go to diffe- "rent quarters, where they ſound their horn; and "theſe animals being accuſtomed to that ſignal, run "immediately each to the horn of his own keeper. "Whereas in GREECE, if the herds of ſwine happen "to mix in the foreſts, he who has the greater flock, "takes cunningly the opportunity of driving all "away. And thieves are very apt to purloin the "ſtraggling hogs, which have wandered to a great "diſtance from their keeper in ſearch of food.

May

* In AURELIAN. cap. 48.
† Lib. xii. cap. 2.

May we not infer from this account, that the north of ITALY, as well as GREECE, was then much leſs peopled, and worſe cultivated, than at preſent? How could theſe vaſt herds be fed in a country ſo full of incloſures, ſo improved by agriculture, ſo divided by farms, ſo planted with vines and corn intermingled together? I muſt confeſs, that POLYBIUS's relation has more the air of that œconomy which is to be met with in our AMERICAN colonies, than the management of a EUROPEAN country.

We meet with a reflection in ARISTOTLE's* Ethicks, which ſeems unaccountable on any ſuppoſition, and by proving too much in favour of our preſent reaſoning, may be thought really to prove nothing. That philoſopher, treating of friendſhip, and obſerving, that this relation ought neither to be contracted to a very few, nor extended over a great multitude, illuſtrates his opinion by the following argument: "In like manner" ſays he, "as a city cannot ſubſiſt, if it either have ſo few inhabitants as ten, or "ſo many as a hundred thouſand; ſo is there a me-"diocrity required in the number of friends: and "you deſtroy the eſſence of friendſhip by running "into either extreme." What! impoſſible that a city can contain a hundred thouſand inhabitants! Had ARISTOTLE never ſeen nor heard of a city ſo populous? This, I muſt own, paſſes my comprehenſion.

PLINY† tells us, that SELEUCIA, the ſeat of the GREEK empire in the Eaſt, was reported to contain 600,000 people. CARTHAGE is ſaid by STRABO‡ to have contained 700,000. The inhabitants of PEKIN are not much more numerous. LONDON, PARIS, and CONSTANTINOPLE, may admit of nearly the ſame computation; at leaſt, the two latter cities do not exceed it. ROME, ALEXANDRIA, ANTIOCH, we have

* Lib. ix. cap. 10. His expreſſion is ανθρωπος, not πολιτης; inhabitant, not citizen.

† Lib. vi. cap. 28. ‡ Lib. xvii.

already ſpoken of. From the experience of paſt and preſent ages, one might conjecture that there is a kind of impoſſibility, that any city could ever riſe much beyond the proportion. Whether the grandeur of a city be founded on commerce or on empire, there ſeem to be invincible obſtacles, which prevent its farther progreſs. The ſeats of vaſt monarchies, by introducing extravagant luxury, irregular expence, idleneſs, dependence, and falſe ideas of rank and ſuperiority, are improper for commerce. Extenſive commerce checks itſelf, by raiſing the price of all labour and commodities. When a great court engages the attendance of a numerous nobility, poſſeſſed of overgrown fortunes, the middling gentry remain in their provincial towns, where they can make a figure on a moderate income. And if the dominions of a ſtate arrive at an enormous ſize, there neceſſarily ariſe many capitals, in the remoter provinces, whither all the inhabitants, except a few courtiers, repair for education, fortune, and amuſement*. LONDON, by uniting extenſive commerce and middling empire, has, perhaps, arrived at a greatneſs, which no city will ever be able to exceed.

Chooſe DOVER or CALAIS for a center: Draw a circle of two hundred miles radius: You comprehend LONDON, PARIS, the NETHERLANDS, the UNITED PROVINCES and ſome of the beſt cultivated parts of FRANCE and ENGLAND. It may ſafely, I think, be affirmed, that no ſpot of ground can be found in antiquity, of equal extent, which contained near ſo many great and populous cities, and was ſo ſtocked with riches and inhabitants. To balance in both periods, the ſtates which poſſeſſed moſt art, knowledge, civility, and the beſt police, ſeems the trueſt method of compariſon.

It

* Such were ALEXANDRIA, ANTIOCH, CARTHAGE, EPHESUS, LYONS, *&c.* in the Roman empire. Such are even BOURDEAUX, THOLOUSE, DIJON, RENNES, ROUEN, AIX, *&c.* in FRANCE, DUBLIN, EDINBURGH, YORK, in the BRITISH dominions.

It is an obſervation of L'ABBE DU BOS, that ITALY is warmer at preſent than it was in acient times. "The annals of ROME tell us," ſays he, "that in "the year 480 *ab U. C.* the winter was ſo ſevere "that it deſtroyed the trees. The TYBER froze in "ROME, and the ground was covered with ſnow for "forty days. When JUVENAL* deſcribes a ſuper-"ſtitious woman, he repreſents her as breaking the "ice of the TYBER, that ſhe might perform her "ablutions:

"*Hybernum fracta glacie deſcendet in amnem,*
"*Ter matutino Tyberi mergetur.*

"He ſpeaks of that rivers freezing as a common "event. Many paſſages of HORACE ſuppoſe the "ſtreets of ROME full of ſnow and ice. We ſhould "have more certainty with regard to this point, "had the ancients known the uſe of thermometers: "But their writers, without intending it, give us in-"formation, ſufficient to convince us, that the win-"ters are now much more temperate at ROME than "formerly. At preſent the TYBER no more freezes "at ROME than the NILE at CAIRO. The ROMANS "eſteem the winters very rigorous, if the ſnow lie "two days, and if one ſee for eight and forty hours "a few icicles hang from a fountain that has a north "expoſure."

The obſervation of this ingenious critic may be extended to other EUROPEAN climates. Who could diſcover the mild climate of FRANCE in DIODORUS SICULUS's† deſcription of that of GAUL? "As it is "a northern climate," ſays he, "it is infeſted with "cold to an extreme degree. In cloudy weather, "inſtead of rain there fall great ſnows; and in "clear weather, it there freezes ſo exceſſive hard, "that the rivers acquire bridges of their own ſub-"ſtance, over which, not only ſingle travellers may "paſs, but large armies, accompanied with all their "baggage and loaded waggons. And there being many

* Sat. 6. † Lib. iv.

" many rivers in GAUL, the RHONE, the RHINE, &c.
" almoſt all of them are frozen over; and it is uſual,
" in order to prevent falling, to cover the ice with
" chaff and ſtraw at the place where the road paſ-
" ſes." *Colder than a* GALLIC *Winter*, is uſed by PETRONIUS as a proverbial expreſſion. ASISTOTLE ſays, that GAUL is ſo cold a climate that an aſs could not live in it*.

North of the CEVENNES, ſays STRABO†, GAUL produces not figs and olives: And the vines which have been planted, bear not grapes that will ripen.

OVID poſitively maintains, with all the ſeries affirmation of proſe, that the EUXINE ſea was frozen over every winter in his time; and he appeals to ROMAN governors, whom he names, for the truth of his aſſertion‡. This ſeldom or never happens at preſent in the latitude of TOMI, whither OVID was baniſhed. All the complaints of the ſame poet ſeem to mark a rigour of the ſeaſons, which is ſcarcely experienced at preſent in PETERSBURGH or STOCKHOLM.

TOURNEFORT, a *Provençal*, who had travelled into the ſame country, obſerves, that there is not a finer climate in the world: And he aſſerts, that nothing but OVID's melancholy could have given him ſuch diſmal ideas of it. But the facts mentioned by that poet are too circumſtantial to bear any ſuch interpretation.

POLYBIUS‖ ſays, that the climate in ARCADIA was very cold, and the air moiſt.

" ITALY," ſays VARRO §, " is the moſt temperate
" climate in EUROPE. The inland parts" (GAUL, GERMANY, and PANNONIA, no doubt) " have almoſt
" perpetual winter."

The northern parts of SPAIN, according to STRABO,

* De generat. anim. lib. ii. † Lib. iv.
‡ *Triſt.* lib. iii. eleg. 9. *De Ponte*, lib. iv eleg. 7. 9. 10.
‖ Lib. iv. cap. 21. § Lib. i. cap. 2.

20*, are but ill inhabitated, becauſe of the great cold.

Allowing, therefore, this remark to be juſt, that EUROPE is become warmer than formerly; how can we account for it? Plainly by no other method, than by ſuppoſing, that the land is at preſent much better cultivated, and that the woods are cleared, which formerly threw a ſhade upon the earth, and kept the rays of the ſun from penetrating to it. Our northern colonies in AMERICA become more temperate, in proportion as the woods are felled†; but in general, every one may remark, that cold is ſtill much more ſeverely felt, both in North and South AMERICA, than in places under the ſame latitude in EUROPE.

SASERNA, quoted by COLUMELLA‡, affirmed, that the diſpoſition of the heavens was altered before his time, and that the air had become much milder and warmer; as appears hence, ſays he, that many places now abound with vineyards and olive plantations, which formerly, by reaſon of the rigour of the climate, could raiſe none of theſe productions. Such a change, if real, will be allowed an evident ſign of the better cultivation and peopling of countries before the age of SASERNA‖; and if it be continued to the preſent times, is a proof, that theſe advantages have been continually encreaſing throughout this part of the world.

Let us now caſt our eye over all the countries which are the ſcene of ancient and modern hiſtory, and compare their paſt and preſent ſituation: We ſhall not, perhaps, find ſuch foundation for the complaint of the preſent emptineſs and deſolation of the world.

* Lib. iii.

† The warm ſouthern colonies alſo become more healthful: And it is remarkable, that in the SPANISH hiſtories of the firſt diſcovery and conqueſt of theſe countries, they appear to have been very healthful; being then well peopled and cultivated. No account of the ſickneſs or decay of CORTES's or PIZARRO's ſmall armies.

‡ Lib. i. cap. 1.

‖ He ſeems to have lived about the time of the younger AFRICANUS; lib. i. cap. 1.

world. ÆGYPT is represented by MAILLET, to whom we owe the best account of it, as extemely populous; though he esteems the number of its inhabitants to be diminished. SYRIA, and the Lesser ASIA, as well as the coast of BARBARY, I can readily own to be desart in comparison of their ancient condition. The depopulation of GREECE is also obvious. But whether the country now called TURKY in EUROPE may not, in general, contain more inhabitants than during the flourishing period of GREECE, may be a little doubtful. The THRACIANS seem then to have lived like the TARTARS at present, by pasturage and plunder *: The GETES were still more uncivilized †: And the ILLYRIANS were no better ‡. These occupy nine-tenths of that country: And though the government of the TURKS be not very favouable to industry and propagation; yet it preserves at least peace and order among the inhabitants; and is preferable to that barbarous, unsettled condition, in which they anciently lived.

POLAND and MUSCOVY in EUROPE are not populous; but are certainly much more so than the ancient SARMATIA and SCYTHIA; where no husbandry or tillage was ever heard of, and pasturage was the sole art by which the people were maintained. The like observation may be extended to DENMARK and SWEDEN. No one ought to esteem the immense swarms of people, which formerly came from the North, and over-ran all EUROPE, to be any objection to this opinion. Where a whole nation, or even half of it, remove their seat; it is easy to imagine, what a prodigious multitude they must form; with what desperate valour they must make their attacks; and how the terror they strike into the invaded nations will make these magnify, in their imagination, both the courage and multitude of the invaders. SCOTLAND is neither extensive nor populous; but were the half

of

* *Xenoph. Exp.* lib. vii. *Polyb.* lib. iv. cap. 45.
† *Ovid. passim, &c. Strabo*, lib. vii. ‡ *Polyb.* lib. ii. cap. 12.

of its inhabitants to seek new seats, they would form a colony as numerous as the TEUTONS and CIMBRI; and would shake all EUROPE, supposing it in no better condition for defence than formerly.

GERMANY has surely at present twenty times more inhabitants than in ancient times, when they cultivated no ground, and each tribe valued itself on the extensive desolation which it spread around; as we learn from CÆSAR *, and TACITUS †, and STRABO ‡. A proof, that the division into small republics will not alone render a nation populous, unless attended with the spirit of peace, order, and industry.

The barbarous condition of BRITAIN in former times is well known, and the thinness of its inhabitants may easily be conjectured, both from their barbarity, and from a circumstance mentioned by HERODIAN ‖, that all BRITAIN was marshy, even in SEVERUS's time, after the ROMANS had been fully settled in it above a century.

It is not easily imagined, that the GAULS were anciently much more advanced in the arts of life than their northern neighbours; since they travelled to this island for their education in the mysteries of the religion and philosophy of the DRUIDS §. I cannot therefore think, that GAUL was then near so populous as FRANCE is at present.

Were we to believe, indeed, and join together the testimony of APPIAN, and that of DIODORUS SICULUS, we must admit of an incredible populousness in GAUL. The former historian ¶ says, that there were 400 nations in that country; the latter ** affirms, that the largest of the GALLIC nations consisted of 200,000 men, besides women and children, and the least of 50,000. Calculating, therefore, at a

* *De Bello Gallico*, lib. vi. † *De Moribus Germ.*
‡ Lib. vii. ‖ Lib. iii. cap. 47.
§ CÆSAR *de Bello Gallico*, lib. xvi. STRABO, lib. vii. says, the GAULS were not much more improved than the GERMANS.
¶ Celt. pars i. ** Lib. v.

a medium, we muſt admit of near 200,000,000 of people, in a country which we eſteem populous at preſent, though ſuppoſed to contain little more than twenty*. Such calculations, therefore, by their extravagance, loſe all manner of authority. We may obſerve, that the equality of property, to which the populouſneſs of antiquity may be aſcribed, had no place among the GAULS†. Their inteſtine wars alſo, before CÆSAR's time, were almoſt perpetual‡. And STRABO‖ obſerves, that though all GAUL was cultivated, yet it was not cultivated with any ſkill or care; the genius of the inhabitants leading them leſs to arts than arms, till their ſlavery under ROME produced peace among themſelves.

CÆSAR§ enumerates very particularly the great forces which were levied in BELGIUM to oppoſe his conqueſts; and makes them amount to 208,000. Theſe were not the whole people able to bear arms: For the ſame hiſtorian tells us, that the BELLOVACI could have brought a hundred thouſand men into the field, though they engaged only for ſixty. Taking the whole, therefore, in this proportion of ten to ſix, the ſum of fighting men in all the ſtates of BELGIUM was about 350,000; all the inhabitants a million and a half. And BELGIUM being about a fourth of GAUL, that country might contain ſix millions, which is not near the third of its preſent inhabitants¶. We are informed by CÆSAR, that the GAULS had no fixed property in land; but that the chieftains, when any death happened in a family, made a new diviſion of all the lands among the ſeveral members of the family. This is the cuſtom of *Taniſtry*, which ſo long prevailed in IRELAND, and which retained that country in a ſtate of miſery, barbariſm, and deſolation.

2 The

* Ancient GAUL was more extenſive than modern FRANCE.
† CÆSAR *de Bello Gallico*, lib. vi. ‡ *Id. ibid.* ‖ Lib. iv.
§ *De Bello Gallico*, lib. ii. ¶ See NOTE. [PP].

The ancient HELVETIA was 250 miles in length, and 180 in breadth, according to the same author*; yet contained only 360,000 inhabitants. The canton of BERNE alone has, at present, as many people.

After this computation of APPIAN and DIODORUS SICULUS, I know not whether I dare affirm, that the modern DUTCH are more numerous than the ancient BATAVI.

SPAIN is, perhaps, decayed from what it was three centuries ago; but if we step backward two thousand years, and consider the restless, turbulent, unsettled condition of its inhabitants, we may probably be inclined to think, that it is now much more populous. Many SPANIARDS killed themselves, when deprived of their arms by the ROMANS†. It appears from PLUTARCH‡, that robbery and plunder were esteemed honourable among the SPANIARDS. HIRTIUS‖ represents in the same light the situation of that country in CÆSAR's time; and he says, that every man was obliged to live in castles and walled towns for his security. It was not till its final conquest under AUGUSTUS, that these disorders were repressed§. The account which STRABO¶ and JUSTIN** give of SPAIN, corresponds exactly with those above mentioned. How much, therefore, must it diminish from our idea of the populousness of antiquity, when we find, that TULLY, comparing ITALY, AFRIC, GAUL, GREECE, and SPAIN, mentions the great number of inhabitants, as the peculiar circumstance which rendered this latter country formidable††?

ITALY

* *De Bello Gallico*, lib. i.
† *Titi Livii*, lib. xxxiv. cap. 17.
‡ *In vita Marii.*
‖ *De Bello Hisp.*
§ *Vell. Paterc.* lib. ii. § 90.
¶ Lib. iii.
** Lib. xliv.

†† "Nec numero Hispanos, nec robore Gallos, nec calliditate "Pœnos, nec artibus Græcos, nec denique hoc ipso hujus gentis, "ac terræ domestico nativoque sensu, Italos ipsos ac Latinos—— "superavimus." *De haruſp. resp.* cap. 9. The disorders of SPAIN seem to have been almost proverbial: "Nec impacatos a tergo "horrebis Iberos." *Virg. Georg* lib. iii. The IBERI are here plainly taken, by a poetical figure, for robbers in general.

ITALY, however, it is probable, has decayed: But how many great cities does it ſtill contain? VENICE, GENOA, PAVIA, TURIN, MILAN, NAPLES, FLORENCE, LEGHORN, which either ſubſiſted not in ancient times, or were then very inconſiderable? If we reflect on this, we ſhall not be apt to carry matters to ſo great an extreme as is uſual with regard to this ſubject.

When the ROMAN authors complain, that ITALY, which formerly exported corn, became dependent on all the provinces for its daily bread, they never aſcribe this alteration to the encreaſe of its inhabitants, but to the neglect of tillage and agriculture*. A natural effect of that pernicious practice of importing corn, in order to diſtribute it *gratis* among the ROMAN citizens, and a very bad means of multiplying the inhabitants of any country†. The *ſportula*, ſo much talked of by MARTIAL and JUVENAL, being preſents regularly made by the great lords to their ſmaller clients, muſt have had a like tendency to produce idleneſs, debauchery, and a continual decay among the people. The pariſh-rates have at preſent the ſame bad conſequences in ENGLAND.

Were I to aſſign a period, when I imagine this part of the world might poſſibly contain more inhabitants than at preſent, I ſhould pitch upon the age of TRAJAN and the ANTONINES; the great extent of the ROMAN empire being then civilized and cultivated, ſettled almoſt in a profound peace both foreign and domeſtic, and living under the ſame regular police and government‡. But we are told, that all extenſive governments, eſpecially abſolute monarchies, are pernicious to population, and contain a ſecret vice

2 and

* VARRO *de re ruſtica*, liv. ii. præf. COLUMELLA præf. SUETON. AUGUST. cap. 42.

† Though the obſervations of L'Abbè du Bos ſhould be admitted, that ITALY is now warmer than in former times, the conſequence may not be neceſſary, that it is more populous or better cultivated. If the other countries of EUROPE were more ſavage and woody, the cold winds that blew from them might affect the climate of ITALY.

‡ See NOTE [QQ].

and poiſon which deſtroy the effect of all theſe promiſing appearances*. To confirm this, there is a paſſage cited from PLUTARCH†, which being ſomewhat ſingular, we ſhall here examine it.

The author, endeavouring to account for the ſilence of many of the oracles, ſays, that it may be aſcribed to the preſent deſolation of the world, proceeding from former wars and factions; which common calamity, he adds, has fallen heavier upon GREECE than on any other country; inſomuch, that the whole could ſcarcely at preſent furniſh three thouſand warriors; a number which, in the time of the MEDIAN war, were ſupplied by the ſingle city of MEGARA. The gods, therefore, who affect works of dignity and importance, have ſuppreſſed many of their oracles, and deign not to uſe ſo many interpreters of their will to ſo diminutive a people.

I muſt confeſs, that this paſſage contains ſo many difficulties, that I know not what to make of it. You may obſerve, that PLUTARCH aſſigns, for a cauſe of the decay of mankind, not the extenſive dominion of the ROMANS, but the former wars and factions of the ſeveral ſtates; all which were quieted by the ROMAN arms. PLUTARCH's reaſoning, therefore, is directly contrary to the inference which is drawn from the fact he advances.

POLYBIUS ſuppoſes, that GREECE had become more proſperous and flouriſhing after the eſtabliſhment of the ROMAN yoke‡; and though that hiſtorian wrote before theſe conquerors had degenerated, from being the patrons, to be the plunderers of mankind; yet as we find from TACITUS‖, that the ſeverity of the emperors afterwards corrected the licence of the governors, we have no reaſon to think that extenſive monarchy ſo deſtructive as it is often repreſented.

We learn from STRABO§, that the ROMANS, from

* *L'Eſprit de Loix*, liv. xxiii. chap. 19. † *De Orac. Defectu.*
‡ See NOTE [RR].
‖ *Annal.* lib. i. cap. 2. § Lib. viii. and ix.

their regard to the GREEKS, maintained, to his time, moſt of the privileges and liberties of that celebrated nation; and NERO afterwards rather encreaſed them*. How therefore can we imagine, that the ROMAN yoke was ſo burdenſome over that part of the world? The oppreſſion of the proconſuls was checked; and the magiſtracies in GREECE being all beſtowed, in the ſeveral cities, by the free votes of the people, there was no neceſſity for the competitors to attend the emperor's court. If great numbers went to ſeek their fortunes in ROME, and advance themſelves by learning or eloquence, the commodities of their native country, many of them would return with the fortunes which they had acquired, and thereby enrich the GRECIAN commonwealths.

But PLUTARCH ſays, that the general depopulation had been more ſenſibly felt in GREECE than in any other country. How is this reconcileable to its ſuperior privileges and advantages?

Beſides, this paſſage, by proving too much, really proves nothing. *Only three thouſand men able to bear arms in all* GREECE! Who can admit ſo ſtrange a propoſition, eſpecially if we conſider the great number of GREEK cities, whoſe names ſtill remain in hiſtory, and which are mentioned by writers long after the age of PLUTARCH? There are there ſurely ten times more people at preſent, when there ſcarcely remains a city in all the bounds of ancient GREECE. That country is ſtill tolerably cultivated, and furniſhes a ſure ſupply of corn, in caſe of any ſcarcity in SPAIN, ITALY, or the South of FRANCE.

We may obſerve, that the ancient frugality of the GREEKS, and their equality of property, ſtill ſubſiſted during the age of PLUTARCH, as appears from LUCIAN†. Nor is there any ground to imagine, that that country was poſſeſſed by a few maſters, and a great number of ſlaves.

It

* PLUTARCH. *De his qui ſero a Numine puniuntur.*

† *De mercede conductis.*

It is probable, indeed, that military diſcipline, being entirely uſeleſs, was extremely neglected in GREECE after the eſtabliſhment of the ROMAN empire; and if theſe commonwealths, formerly ſo warlike and ambitious, maintained each of them a ſmall city-guard to prevent mobbiſh diſorders, it is all they had occaſion for; and theſe perhaps did not amount to 3000 men throughout all GREECE. I own, that if PLUTARCH had this fact in his eye, he is here guilty of a groſs paralogiſm, and aſſigns cauſes no wiſe proportioned to the effects. But is it ſo great a prodigy, that an author ſhould fall into a miſtake of this nature *,

But whatever force may remain in this paſſage of PLUTARCH, we ſhall endeavour to counterbalance it by as remarkable a paſſage in DIODORUS SICULUS, where the hiſtorian, after mentioning NINUS's army of 1,700,000 foot, and 200,000 horſe, endeavours to ſupport the credibility of this account by ſome poſterior facts; and adds, that we muſt not form a notion of the ancient populouſneſs of mankind from the preſent emptineſs and depopulation which is ſpread over the world†. Thus an author, who lived at that very period of antiquity which is repreſented as moſt populous‡, complains of the deſolation which then prevailed, gives the preference to former times, and has recourſe to ancient fables as a foundation for his opinion. The humour of blaming the preſent, and admiring the paſt, is ſtrongly rooted in human nature, and has an influence even on perſons endued with the profoundeſt judgment and moſt extenſive learning.

* See NOTE [SS]. † Lib. ii.
‡ He was cotemporary with CÆSAR and AUGUSTUS.

ESSAY XII.

Of the ORIGINAL CONTRACT.

AS no party, in the preſent age, can well ſupport itſelf, without a philoſophical or ſpeculative ſyſtem of principles, annexed to its political or practical one, we accordingly find, that each of the factions, into which this nation is divided, has reared up a fabric of the former kind, in order to protect and cover that ſcheme of actions which it purſues. The people being commonly very rude builders, eſpecially in this ſpeculative way, and more eſpecially ſtill when actuated by party-zeal; it is natural to imagine, that their workmanſhip muſt be a little unſhapely, and diſcover evident marks of that violence and hurry in which it was raiſed. The one party, by tracing up government to the DEITY, endeavour to render it ſo ſacred and inviolate, that it muſt be little leſs than ſacrilege, however tyrannical it may become, to touch or invade it in the ſmalleſt article. The other party, by founding government altogether on the conſent of the PEOPLE, ſuppoſe that there is a kind of *original contract*, by which the ſubjects have tacitly reſerved the power of reſiſting their ſovereign, whenever they find themſelves aggrieved by that authority, with which they have, for certain purpoſes, voluntarily entruſted him. Theſe are the ſpeculative principles of the two parties; and theſe too are the practical conſequences deduced from them.

I ſhall venture to affirm, *That both theſe* ſyſtems *of ſpeculative principles are juſt; though not in the ſenſe intended by the parties:* And, *That both the* ſchemes *of*

of practical conſequences are prudent; though not in the extremes to which each party, in oppoſition to the other, has commonly endeavoured to carry them.

That the DEITY is the ultimate author of all government, will never be denied by any who admit a general providence, and allow, that all events in the univerſe are conducted by an uniform plan, and directed to wiſe purpoſes. As it is impoſſible for the human race to ſubſiſt, at leaſt in any comfortable or ſecure ſtate, without the protection of government; this inſtitution muſt certainly have been intended by that beneficient Being, who means the good of all his creatures: And as it has univerſally, in fact, taken place, in all countries, and all ages; we may conclude, with ſtill greater certainty, that it was intended by that omniſcient Being, who can never be deceived by any event or operation. But ſince he gave riſe to it, not by any particular or miraculous interpoſition, but by his concealed and univerſal efficacy; a ſovereign cannot, properly ſpeaking, be called his vicegerent, in any other ſenſe than every power or force, being derived from him, may be ſaid to act by his commiſſion. Whatever actually happens is comprehended in the general plan or intention of providence; nor has the greateſt and moſt lawful prince any more reaſon, upon that account, to plead a peculiar ſacredneſs or inviolable authority, than an inferior magiſtrate or even an uſurper, or even a robber and a pirate. The ſame divine ſuperintendent, who, for wiſe purpoſes, inveſted a TITUS or a TRAJAN with authority, did alſo, for purpoſes, no doubt, equally wiſe, though unknown, beſtow power on a BORGIA or an ANGRIA. The ſame cauſes, which gave riſe to the ſovereign power in every ſtate, eſtabliſhed likewiſe every petty juriſdiction in it, and every limited authority. A conſtable, therefore, no leſs than a king, acts by a divine commiſſion, and poſſeſſes an indefeaſible right.

When we conſider how nearly equal all men are in

their bodily force, and even in their mental powers and faculties, till cultivated by education; we muſt neceſſarily allow, that nothing but their own conſent could, at firſt, aſſociate them together, and ſubject them to any authority. The people, if we trace government to its firſt origin in the woods and deſarts, are the ſource of all power and juriſdiction, and voluntarily, for the ſake of peace and order, abandoned their native liberty, and received laws from their equal and companion. The conditions, upon which they were willing to ſubmit, were either expreſſed, or were ſo clear and obvious, that it might well be eſteemed ſuperfluous to expreſs them. If this, then, be meant by the *original contract*, it cannot be denied, that all government is, at firſt, founded on a contract, and that the moſt ancient rude combinations of mankind were formed chiefly by that principle. In vain, are we aſked in what records this charter of our liberties is regiſtered. It was not written on parchment, nor yet on leaves or barks of trees. It preceded the uſe of writing and all the other civilized arts of life. But we trace it plainly in the nature of man, and in the equality, or ſomething approaching equality, which we find in all the individuals of that ſpecies. The force, which now prevails, and which is founded on fleets and armies, is plainly political, and derived from authority, the effect of eſtabliſhed government. A man's natural force conſiſts only in the vigour of his limbs, and the firmneſs of his courage; which could never ſubject multitudes to the command of one. Nothing but their own conſent, and their ſenſe of the advantages reſulting from peace and order, could have had that influence.

Yet even this conſent was long very imperfect, and could not be the baſis of a regular adminiſtration. The chieftain, who had probably acquired his influence during the continuance of war, ruled more by perſuaſion than command; and till he could employ force to reduce the refractory and diſobedient, the

the ſociety could ſcarcely be ſaid to have attained a ſtate of civil government. No compact or agreement, it is evident, was expreſsly formed for general ſubmiſſion; an idea far beyond the comprehenſion of ſavages: Each exertion of authority in the chieftain muſt have been particular, and called forth by the preſent exigencies of the caſe: The ſenſible utility, reſulting from his interpoſition, made theſe exertions become daily more frequent; and their frequency gradually produced an habitual, and, if you pleaſe to call it ſo, a voluntary, and therefore precarious, acquieſcence in the people.

But philoſophers, who have embraced a party (if that be not a contradiction in terms) are not contented with theſe conceſſions. They aſſert, not only that government in its earlieſt infancy aroſe from conſent, or rather the voluntary acquieſcence of the people; but alſo, that, even at preſent, when it has attained its full maturity, it reſts on no other foundation. They affirm, that all men are ſtill born equal, and owe allegiance to no prince or government, unleſs bound by the obligation and ſanction of a *promiſe*. And as no man, without ſome equivalent, would forego the advantages of his native liberty, and ſubject himſelf to the will of another; this promiſe is always underſtood to be conditional, and impoſes on him no obligation, unleſs he meet with juſtice and protection from his ſovereign. Theſe advantages the ſovereign promiſes him in return; and if he fail in the execution, he has broken, on his part, the articles of engagement, and has thereby freed his ſubject from all obligations to allegiance. Such, according to theſe philoſophers, is the foundation of authority in every government; and ſuch the right of reſiſtance poſſeſſed by every ſubject.

But would theſe reaſoners look abroad into the world, they would meet with nothing that, in the leaſt, correſponds to their ideas, or can warrant ſo refined and philoſophical a ſyſtem. On the contrary,

we find, every where, princes, who claim their ſubjects as their property, and aſſert their independent right of ſovereignity, from conqueſt or ſucceſſion. We find alſo, every where, ſubjects, who acknowledge this right in their prince, and ſuppoſe themſelves born under obligations of obedience to a certain ſovereign, as much as under the ties of reverence and duty to certain parents. Theſe connections are always conceived to be equally independent of our conſent, in PERSIA and CHINA; in FRANCE and SPAIN; and even in HOLLAND and ENGLAND, wherever the doctrines above-mentioned have not been carefully inculcated. Obedience or ſubjection becomes ſo familiar, that moſt men never make any enquiry about its origin or cauſe, more than about the principle of gravity, reſiſtance, or the moſt univerſal laws of nature. Or if curioſity ever move them, as ſoon as they learn, that they themſelves and their anceſtors have, for ſeveral ages, or from time immemorial, been ſubject to ſuch a form of government or ſuch a family; they immediately acquieſce, and acknowledge their obligation to allegiance. Were you to preach, in moſt parts of the world, that political connections are founded altogether on voluntary conſent or a mutual promiſe, the magiſtrate would ſoon impriſon you, as ſeditious, for looſening the ties of obedience; if your friends did not before ſhut you up as delirious for advancing ſuch abſurdities. It is ſtrange, that an act of the mind, which every individual is ſuppoſed to have formed, and after he came to the uſe of reaſon too, otherwiſe it could have no authority; that this act, I ſay, ſhould be ſo much unknown to all of them, that, over the face of the whole earth, there ſcarcely remain any traces or memory of it.

But the contract, on which government is founded, is ſaid to be the *original contract;* and conſequently may be ſuppoſed too old to fall under the knowledge of the preſent generation. If the agreement, by which

which ſavage men firſt aſſociated and conjoined their force, be here meant, this is acknowledged to be real; but being ſo ancient, and being obliterated by a thouſand changes of government and princes, it cannot now be ſuppoſed to retain any authority. If we would ſay any thing to the purpoſe, we muſt aſſert, that every particular government, which is lawful, and which impoſes any duty of allegiance on the ſubject, was, at firſt, founded on conſent and a voluntary compact. But beſides that this ſuppoſes the conſent of the fathers to bind the children, even to the moſt remote generations (which republican writers will never allow), beſides this, I ſay, it is not juſtified by hiſtory or experience, in any age or country of the world.

Almoſt all the governments, which exiſt at preſent, or of which there remains any record in ſtory, have been founded originally, either on uſurpation or conqueſt, or both, without any pretence of a fair conſent, or voluntary ſubjection of the people. When an artful and bold man is placed at the head of an army or faction, it is often eaſy for him, by employing, ſometimes violence, ſometimes falſe pretences, to eſtabliſh his dominion over a people a hundred times more numerous than his partizans. He allows no ſuch open communication, that his enemies can know, with certainty, their number or force. He gives them no leiſure to aſſemble together in a body to oppoſe him. Even all thoſe, who are the inſtruments of his uſurpation, may wiſh his fall; but their ignorance of each others intention keeps them in awe, and is the ſole cauſe of his ſecurity. By ſuch arts as theſe, many governments have been eſtabliſhed; and this is all the *original contract* which they have to boaſt of.

The face of the earth is continually changing, by the encreaſe of ſmall kingdoms into great empires, by the diſſolution of great empires into ſmaller kingdoms, by the planting of colonies, by the migration of tribes,

tribes. Is there any thing diſcoverable in all theſe events, but force and violence? Where is the mutual agreement or voluntary aſſociation ſo much talked of?

Even the ſmootheſt way, by which a nation may receive a foreign maſter, by marriage or a will, is not extremely honourable for the people; but ſuppoſes them to be diſpoſed of, like a dowry or a legacy, according to the pleaſure or intereſt of their rulers.

But where no force interpoſes, and election takes place; what is this election ſo highly vaunted? It is either the combination of a few great men, who decide for the whole, and will allow of no oppoſition: Or it is the fury of a multitude, that follow a ſeditious ringleader, who is not known, perhaps, to a dozen among them, and who owes his advancement merely to his own impudence, or to the momentary caprice of his fellows.

Are theſe diſorderly elections, which are rare too, of ſuch mighty authority, as to be the only lawful foundation of all government and allegiance?

In reality, there is not a more terrible event, than a total diſſolution of government, which gives liberty to the multitude, and makes the determination or choice of a new eſtabliſhment depend upon a number, which nearly approaches to that of the body of the people: For it never comes entirely to the whole body of them. Every wiſe man, then, wiſhes to ſee at the head of a powerful and obedient army, a general, who may ſpeedily ſeize the prize, and give to the people a maſter, which they are ſo unfit to chooſe for themſelves. So little correſpondent is fact and reality to thoſe philoſophical notions.

Let not the eſtabliſhment at the *Revolution* deceive us, or make us ſo much in love with a philoſophical origin to government, as to imagine all others monſtrous and irregular. Even that event was far from correſponding to theſe refined ideas. It was only the

the ſucceſſion, and that only in the regal part of the government, which was then changed: And it was only the majority of ſeven hundred, who determined that change for near ten millions. I doubt not, indeed, but the bulk of thoſe ten millions acquieſced willingly in the determination: But was the matter left, in the leaſt, to their choice? Was it not juſtly ſuppoſed to be, from that moment, decided, and every man puniſhed, who refuſed to ſubmit to the new ſovereign? How otherwiſe could the matter have ever been brought to any iſſue or concluſion?

The republic of ATHENS was, I believe, the moſt extenſive democracy that we read of in hiſtory: Yet if we make the requiſite allowances for the women, the ſlaves, and the ſtrangers, we ſhall find, that that eſtabliſhment was not at firſt made, nor any law ever voted, by a tenth part of thoſe who were bound to pay obedience to it: Not to mention the iſland and foreign dominions, which the ATHENIANS claimed as theirs by right of conqueſt. And as it is well known, that popular aſſemblies in that city were always full of licence and diſorder, notwithſtanding the inſtitutions and laws by which they were checked; how much more diſorderly muſt they prove, where they form not the eſtabliſhed conſtitution, but meet tumultuouſly on the diſſolution of the ancient government, in order to give riſe to a new one? How chimerical muſt it be to talk of a choice in ſuch circumſtances?

The ACHÆANS enjoyed the freeſt and moſt perfect democracy of all antiquity; yet they employed force to oblige ſome cities to enter into their league, as we learn from POLYBIUS*.

HARRY the IVth and HARRY the VIIth of ENGLAND, had really no title to the throne but a parliamentary election; yet they never would acknowledge it, leſt they ſhould thereby weaken their authority. Strange,

* Lib. ii. cap. 38.

Strange, if the only real foundation of all authority be consent and promise!

It is in vain to say, that all governments are or should be, at first, founded on popular consent, as much as the necessity of human affairs will admit. This favours entirely my pretension. I maintain, that human affairs will never admit of this consent; seldom of the appearance of it. But that conquest or usurpation, that is, in plain terms, force, by dissolving the ancient governments, is the origin of almost all the new ones which were ever established in the world. And that in the few cases where consent may seem to have taken place, it was commonly so irregular, so confined, or so much intermixed either with fraud or violence, that it cannot have any great authority.

My intention here is not to exclude the consent of the people from being one just foundation of government where it has place. It is surely the best and most sacred of any. I only pretend, that it has very seldom had place in any degree, and never almost in its full extent: And that therefore some other foundation of government must also be admitted.

Were all men possessed of so inflexible a regard to justice, that, of themselves, they would totally abstain from the properties of others; they had for ever remained in a state of absolute liberty, without subjection to any magistrate or political society: But this is a state of perfection of which human nature is justly deemed incapable. Again; were all men possessed of so perfect an understanding, as always to know their own interests, no form of government had ever been submitted to, but what was established on consent, and was fully canvassed by every member of the society: But this state of perfection is likewise much superior to human nature. Reason, history, and experience show us, that all political societies have had an origin much less accurate and regular;

regular; and were one to chuſe a period of time, when the peoples conſent was the leaſt regarded in public tranſactions, it would be preciſely on the eſtabliſhment of a new government. In a ſettled conſtitution, their inclinations are often conſulted: but during the fury of revolutions, conqueſts, and public convulſions, military force or political craft uſually dicides the controverſy.

When a new government is eſtabliſhed, by whatever means, the people are commonly diſſatisfied with it, and pay obedience more from fear and neceſſity, than from any idea of allegiance or of moral obligation. The prince is watchful and jealous, and muſt carefully guard againſt every beginning or appearance of inſurrection. Time, by degrees, removes all theſe difficulties, and accuſtoms the nation to regard, as their lawful or native princes, that family which, at firſt, they conſidered as uſurpers or foreign conquerors. In order to found this opinion, they have no recourſe to any notion of voluntary conſent or promiſe, which, they know, never was, in this caſe, either expected or demanded. The original eſtabliſhment was formed by violence, and ſubmitted to from neceſſity. The ſubſequent adminiſtration is alſo ſupported by power, and acquieſced in by the people, not as a matter of choice, but of obligation. They imagine not, that their conſent gives their prince a title: But they willingly conſent, becauſe they think, that, from long poſſeſſion, he has acquired a title, independent of their choice or inclination.

Should it be ſaid, that, by living under the dominion of a prince, which one might leave, every individual has given a *tacit* conſent to his authority, and promiſed him obedience; it may be anſwered, that ſuch an implied conſent can only have place, where a man imagines that the matter depends on his choice. But where he thinks (as all mankind do who are born under eſtabliſhed governments) that by his birth he owes allegiance to a certain prince

or

or certain form of government; it would be abſurd to infer a conſent or choice, which he expreſsly, in this caſe, renounces and diſclaims.

Can we ſeriouſly ſay, that a poor peaſant or artizan has a free choice to leave his country, when he knows no foreign language or manners, and lives, from day to day, by the ſmall wages which he acquires? We may as well aſſert, that a man, by remaining in a veſſel, freely conſents to the dominion of the maſter; though he was carried on board while aſleep, and muſt leap into the ocean, and periſh the moment he leaves her.

What if the prince forbid his ſubjects to quit his dominions; as in TIBERIUS's time, it was regarded as a crime in a ROMAN knight that he had attempted to fly to the PARTHIANS, in order to eſcape the tyranny of that emperor*? Or as the ancient MUSCOVITES prohibited all travelling under pain of death? And did a prince obſerve, that many of his ſubjects were ſeized with the frenzy of migrating to foreign countries, he would doubtleſs, with great reaſon and juſtice, reſtrain them, in order to prevent the depopulation of his own kingdom. Would he forfeit the allegiance of all his ſubjects, by ſo wiſe and reaſonable a law? Yet the freedom of their choice is ſurely in that caſe raviſhed from them.

A company of men, who ſhould leave their native country, in order to people ſome inhabited region, might dream of recovering their native freedom; but they would ſoon find, that their prince ſtill laid claim to them, and called them his ſubjects, even in their new ſettlement. And in this he would but act conformably to the common ideas of mankind.

The trueſt *tacit* conſent of this kind, that is ever obſerved, is when a foreigner ſettles in any country, and is before hand acquainted with the prince, and government, and laws, to which he muſt ſubmit: Yet is his allegiance, though more voluntary, much

* TACIT. Ann. lib. vi. cap. 14.

leſs expected or depended on, than that of a natural born ſubject. On the contrary, his native prince ſtill aſſerts a claim to him. And if he puniſh not the renegade, when he ſeizes him in war with his new prince's commiſſion; this clemency is not founded on the municipal law, which in all countries condemns the priſoner; but on the conſent of princes, who have agreed to this indulgence, in order to prevent repriſals.

Did one generation of men go off the ſtage at once, and another ſucceed, as is the caſe with ſilk-worms and butterflies, the new race, if they had ſenſe enough to chooſe their government, which ſurely is never the caſe with men, might voluntarily, and by general conſent, eſtabliſh their own form of civil polity, without any regard to the laws or precedents which prevailed among their anceſtors. But as human ſociety is in perpetual flux, one man every hour going out of the world, another coming into it, it is neceſſary, in order to preſerve ſtability in government, that the new brood ſhould conform themſelves to the eſtabliſhed conſtitution, and nearly follow the path which their fathers, treading in the footſteps of theirs, had marked out to them. Some innovations muſt neceſſarily have place in every human inſtitution; and it is happy where the enlightened genius of the age give theſe a direction to the ſide of reaſon, liberty, and juſtice: But violent innovations no individual is intitled to make: They are even dangerous to be attempted by the legiſlature: More ill than good is ever to be expected from them: And if hiſtory affords examples to the contrary, they are not to be drawn into precedent, and are only to be regarded as proofs, that the ſcience of politics affords few rules, which will not admit of ſome exception, and which may not ſometimes be controlled by fortune and accident. The violent innovations in the reign of HENRY VIII. proceeded from an imperious monarch, ſeconded by the appearance of legiſlative authority:

authority: Thoſe in the reign of CHARLES I. were derived from faction and fanaticiſm; and both of them have proved happy in the iſſue: But even the former were long the ſource of many diſorders, and ſtill more dangers; and if the meaſures of allegiance were to be taken from the latter, a total anarchy muſt have place in human ſociety, and a final period at once be put to every government.

Suppoſe that an uſurper, after having baniſhed his lawful prince and royal family, ſhould eſtabliſh his dominion for ten or a dozen years in any country, and ſhould preſerve ſo exact a diſcipline in his troops, and ſo regular a diſpoſition in his garriſons, that no inſurrection had ever been raiſed, or even murmur heard, againſt his adminiſtration; can it be aſſerted, that the people, who in their hearts abhor his treaſon, have tacitly conſented to his authority, and promiſed him allegiance, merely becauſe, from neceſſity, they live under his dominion? Suppoſe again their native prince reſtored, by means of an army, which he levies in foreign countries: They receive him with joy and exultation, and ſhow plainly with what reluctance they had ſubmitted to any other yoke. I may now aſk, upon what foundation the prince's title ſtands? Not on popular conſent ſurely: For though the people willingly acquieſce in his authority, they never imagine, that their conſent made him ſovereign. They conſent; becauſe they apprehend him to be already, by birth, their lawful ſovereign. And as to that tacit conſent, which may now be inferred from their living under his dominion, this is no more than what they formerly gave to the tyrant and uſurper.

When we aſſert, that all lawful government ariſes from the conſent of the people, we certainly do them a great deal more honour than they deſerve, or even expect and deſire from us. After the ROMAN dominions became too unwieldy for the republic to govern them, the people, over the whole known world,

were extremely grateful to AUGUSTUS for that authority, which, by violence, he had eſtabliſhed over them; and they ſhowed an equal diſpoſition to ſubmit to the ſucceſſor, whom he left them by his laſt will and teſtament. It was afterwards their misfortune, that there never was, in one family, any long regular ſucceſſion; but that their line of princes was continually broken, either by private aſſaſſinations or public rebellions. The *prætorian* bands, on the failure of every family, ſet up one emperor; the legions in the Eaſt a ſecond; thoſe in GERMANY, perhaps, a third: And the ſword alone could decide the controverſy. The condition of the people in that mighty monarchy, was to be lamented, not becauſe the choice of the emperor was never left to them; for that was impracticable: But becauſe they never fell under any ſucceſſion of maſters, who might regularly follow each other. As to the violence and wars and bloodſhed, occaſioned by every new ſettlement; theſe were not blameable, becauſe they were inevitable.

The houſe of LANCASTER ruled in this iſland about ſixty years; yet the partizans of the white roſe ſeemed daily to multiply in ENGLAND. The preſent eſtabliſhment has taken place during a ſtill longer period. Have all views of right in another family been utterly extinguiſhed; even though ſcarce any man now alive had arrived at years of diſcretion, when it was expelled, or could have conſented to its dominion, or have promiſed it allegiance? A ſufficient indication ſurely of the general ſentiment of mankind on this head. For we blame not the partizans of the abdicated family, merely on account of the long time during which they have preſerved their imaginary loyalty: We blame them for adhering to a family, which we affirm, has been juſtly expelled, and which, from the moment the new ſettlement took place, had forfeited all title to authority.

But would we have a more regular, at leaſt a more

philoſophical refutation of this principle of an original contract or popular conſent; perhaps the following obſervations may ſuffice.

All *moral* duties may be divided into two kinds. The *firſt* are thoſe to which men are impelled by a natural inſtinct, or immediate propenſity, which operates on them, independent of all ideas of obligation, and of all views, either to public or private utility. Of this nature are, love of children, gratitude to benefactors, pity to the unfortunate. When we reflect on the advantage which reſults to ſociety from ſuch humane inſtincts, we pay them the juſt tribute of moral approbation and eſteem: But the perſon, actuated by them, feels their power and influence antecedent to any ſuch reflection.

The *ſecond* kind of moral duties are ſuch as are not ſupported by any original inſtinct of nature, but are performed entirely from a ſenſe of obligation, when we conſider the neceſſities of human ſociety, and the impoſſibility of ſupporting it, if theſe duties were neglected. It is thus *juſtice* or a regard to the property of others, *fidelity* or the obſervance of promiſes, becomes obligatory, and acquire an authority over mankind. For as it is evident, that every man loves himſelf better than any other perſon, he is naturally impelled to extend his acquiſitions as much as poſſible; and nothing can reſtrain him in this propenſity, but reflection and experience, by which he learns the pernicious effects of that licence, and the total diſſolution of ſociety which muſt enſue from it. His original inclination, therefore, or inſtinct, is here checked and reſtrained by a ſubſequent judgment or obſervation.

The caſe is preciſely the ſame with the political or civil duty of *allegiance*, as with the natural duties of juſtice and fidelity. Our primary inſtincts lead us, either to indulge ourſelves in unlimited freedom, or to ſeek dominion over others: And it is reflection only, which engages us to ſacrifice ſuch ſtrong paſſions

ſions to the intereſts of peace and public order. A ſmall degree of experience and obſervation ſuffices to teach us, that ſociety cannot poſſibly be maintained without the authority of magiſtrates, and that this authority muſt ſoon fall into contempt, where exact obedience is not paid to it. The obſervation of theſe general and obvious intereſts is the ſource of all allegiance, and of that moral obligation which we attribute to it.

What neceſſity, therefore, is there to found the duty of *allegiance* or obedience to magiſtrates on that of *fidelity* or a regard to promiſes, and to ſuppoſe, that it is the conſent of each individual, which ſubjects him to government; when it appears that both allegiance and fidelity ſtand preciſely on the ſame foundation, and are both ſubmitted to by mankind, on account of the apparent intereſts and neceſſities of human ſociety? We are bound to obey our ſovereign, it is ſaid; becauſe we have given a tacit promiſe to that purpoſe. But why are we bound to obſerve our promiſe? It muſt here be aſſerted, that the commerce and intercourſe of mankind, which are of ſuch mighty advantage, can have no ſecurity where men pay no regard to their engagements. In like manner, may it be ſaid, that men could not live at all in ſociety, at leaſt in a civilized ſociety, without laws and magiſtrates and judges, to prevent the encroachments of the ſtrong upon the weak, of the violent upon the juſt and equitable. The obligation to allegiance being of like force and authority with the obligation to fidelity, we gain nothing by reſolving the one into the other. The general intereſts or neceſſities of ſociety are ſufficient to eſtabliſh both.

If the reaſon be aſked of that obedience, which we are bound to pay to government, I readily anſwer, *becauſe ſociety could not otherwiſe ſubſiſt:* And this anſwer is clear and intelligible to all mankind. Your anſwer is, *becauſe we ſhould keep our word.* But

beſides, that no body, till trained in a philoſophical ſyſtem, can either comprehend or reliſh this anſwer: Beſides this, I ſay, you find yourſelf embarraſſed, when it is aſked, *why we are bound to keep our word?* Nor can you give any anſwer, but what would immediately, without any circuit, have accounted for our obligation to allegiance.

But *to whom is allegiance due? And who is our lawful ſovereign?* This queſtion is often the moſt difficult of any, and liable to infinite diſcuſſions. When people are ſo happy, that they can anſwer, *Our preſent ſovereign, who inherits, in a direct line, from anceſtors that have governed us for many ages;* this anſwer admits of no reply; even though hiſtorians, in tracing up to the remoteſt antiquity, the origin of that royal family, may find, as commonly happens, that its firſt authority was derived from uſurpation and violence. It is confeſſed, that private juſtice, or the abſtinence from the properties of others, is a moſt cardinal virtue: Yet reaſon tells us, that there is no property in durable objects, ſuch as lands or houſes, when carefully examined in paſſing from hand to hand, but muſt, in ſome period, have been founded on fraud and injuſtice. The neceſſities of human ſociety, neither in private nor public life, will allow of ſuch an accurate inquiry: And there is no virtue or moral duty, but what may with facility be refined away, if we indulge a falſe philoſophy, in ſifting and ſcrutinizing it, by every captious rule of logic, in every light or poſition, in which it may be placed.

The queſtions with regard to private property have filled infinite volumes of law and philoſophy, if in both we add the commentators to the original text; and in the end, we may ſafely pronounce, that many of the rules, there eſtabliſhed, are uncertain, ambiguous, and arbitrary. The like opinion may be formed with regard to the ſucceſſion and rights of princes and forms of government. Several caſes,

caſes, no doubt, occur, eſpecially in the infancy of any conſtitution, which admit of no determination from the laws of juſtice and equity: And our hiſtorian RAPIN pretends, that the controverſy between EDWARD the Third and PHILIP DE VALOIS was of this nature, and could be decided only by an appeal to heaven, that is, by war and violence.

Who ſhall tell me, whether GERMANICUS or DRUSUS ought to have ſucceeded to TIBERIUS, had he died, while they were both alive, without naming any of them for his ſucceſſor? Ought the right of adoption to be received as equivalent to that of blood, in a nation, where it had the ſame effect in private families, and had already, in two inſtances, taken place in the public? Ought GERMANICUS to be eſteemed the elder ſon becauſe he was born before DRUSES: or the younger, becauſe he was adopted after the birth of his brother? Ought the right of the elder to be regarded in a nation, where he had no advantage in the ſucceſſion of private families? Ought the ROMAN empire at that time to be deemed hereditary, becauſe of two examples? or ought it, even ſo early, to be regarded as belonging to the ſtronger or to the preſent poſſeſſor, as being founded on ſo recent an uſurpation?

COMMODUS mounted the throne after a pretty long ſucceſſion of excellent emperors, who had acquired their title, not by birth, or public election, but by the fictitious rite of adoption. That bloody debauchee being murdered by a conſpiracy, ſuddenly formed between his wench and her gallant, who happened at that time to be *Prætorian Præfect*; theſe immediately deliberated about chooſing a maſter to human kind, to ſpeak in the ſtyle of thoſe ages; and they caſt their eyes on PERTINAX. Before the tyrant's death was known, the *Præfect* went ſecretly to that ſenator, who, on the appearance of the ſoldiers, imagined that his execution had been ordered by COMMODUS. He was immediately ſaluted

emperor by the officer and his attendants; cheerfully proclaimed by the populace; unwillingly ſubmitted to by the guards; formerly recognized by the ſenate; and paſſively received by the provinces and armies of the empire.

The diſcontent of the *Prætorian* bands broke out in a ſudden ſedition, which occaſioned the murder of that excellent prince: And the world being now without a maſter and without government, the guards thought proper to ſet the empire formally to ſale. JULIAN, the purchaſer, was proclaimed by the ſoldiers, recognized by the ſenate, and ſubmitted to by the people; and muſt alſo have been ſubmitted to by the provinces, had not the envy of the legions begotten oppoſition and reſiſtance. PESCENNIUS NIGER in SYRIA elected himſelf emperor, gained the tumultary conſent of his army, and was attended with the ſecret good-will of the ſenate and people of ROME. ALBINUS in BRITAIN found an equal right to ſet up his claim; but SEVERUS, who governed PANNONIA, prevailed in the end above both of them. That able politician and warrior, finding his own birth and dignity too much inferior to the imperial crown, profeſſed at firſt an intention only of revenging the death of PERTINAX. He marched as general into ITALY; defeated JULIAN; and without our being able to fix any preciſe commencement even of the ſoldiers conſent, he was from neceſſity acknowledged emperor by the ſenate and people; and fully eſtabliſhed in his violent authority by ſubduing NIGER and ALBINUS *.

Inter hæc Gordianus CÆSAR (ſays CAPITOLINUS, ſpeaking of another period) *ſublatus a militibus.* Imperator *eſt appellatus, quia non erat alius in præſenti.* It is to be remarked, that GORDIAN was a boy of fourteen years of age.

Frequent inſtances of a like nature occur in the hiſtory of the emperors; in that of ALEXANDER's ſuc-

* HERODIAN, lib. ii.

ſucceſſors; and of many other countries: Nor can any thing be more unhappy than a deſpotic government of this kind; where the ſucceſſion is disjointed and irregular, and muſt be determined, on every vacancy, by force or election. In a free government the matter is often unavoidable, and is alſo much leſs dangerous. The intereſts of liberty may there frequently lead the people, in their own defence, to alter the ſucceſſion of the crown. And the conſtitution, being compounded of parts, may ſtill maintain a ſufficient ſtability, by reſting on the ariſtocratical or democratical members, though the monarchical be altered, from time to time, in order to accommodate it to the former.

In an abſolute government, when there is no legal prince who has a title to the throne, it may ſafely be determined to belong to the firſt occupant. Inſtances of this kind are but too frequent, eſpecially in the eaſtern monarchies. When any race of princes expires, the will or deſtination of the laſt ſovereign will be regarded as a title. Thus the edict of LEWIS the XIVth, who called the baſtard princes to the ſucceſſion in caſe of the failure of all the legitimate princes, would, in ſuch an event, have ſome authority *. Thus the will of CHARLES the Second diſpoſed of the whole SPANISH monarchy. The ceſſion of the ancient proprietor, eſpecially when joined to conqueſt, is likewiſe deemed a good title.

The general obligation, which binds us to government is, the intereſt and neceſſities of ſociety; and this obligation is very ſtrong. The determination of it to this or that particular prince or form of government, is frequently more uncertain and dubious. Preſent poſſeſſion has conſiderable authority in theſe caſes, and greater than in private property; becauſe of the diſorders which attend all revolutions and changes of government.

We ſhall only obſerve, before we conclude, that,

* See NOTE [TT].

though an appeal to general opinion may juſtly, in the ſpeculative ſciences of metaphyſics, natural philoſophy, or aſtronomy, be deemed unfair and inconcluſive, yet in all queſtions with regard to morals, as well as criticiſm, there is really no other ſtandard, by which any controverſy can ever be decided. And nothing is a clearer proof, that a theory of this kind is erroneous, than to find, that it leads to paradoxes, repugnant to the common ſentiments of mankind, and to the practice and opinion of all nations and all ages. The doctrine, which founds all lawful government on an *original contract*, or conſent of the people, is plainly of this kind; nor has the moſt noted of its partizans, in proſecution of it, ſcrupled to affirm, *that abſolute monarchy is inconſiſtent with civil ſociety, and ſo can be no form of civil government at all**; and *that the ſupreme power in a ſtate cannot take from any man, by taxes and impoſitions, any part of his property, without his own conſent or that of his repreſentatives*†. What authority any moral reaſoning can have, which leads into opinions, ſo wide of the general practice of mankind, in every place but this ſingle kingdom, it is eaſy to determine.

The only paſſage I meet with in antiquity, where the obligation of obedience to government is aſcribed to a promiſe, is in PLATO's *Crito*; where SOCRATES refuſes to eſcape from priſon, becauſe he had tacitly promiſed to obey the laws. Thus he builds a *tory* conſequence of paſſive obedience on a *whig* foundation of the original contract.

New diſcoveries are not to be expected in theſe matters. If ſcarce any man, till very lately, ever imagined that government was founded on compact, it is certain, that it cannot, in general, have any ſuch foundation.

The crime of rebellion among the ancients was commonly expreſſed by the terms νεωτερίζειν, *novas res moliri*.

ESSAY

* See LOCKE on Government, chap. vii. § 90.

† Id. chap. xi. § 138. 139. 140.

ESSAY XIII.

Of Passive Obedience.

IN the former eſſay, we endeavour to refute the *ſpeculative* ſyſtems of politics advanced in this nation; as well the religious ſyſtem of the one party, as the philoſophical of the other. We come now to examine the *practical* conſequences, deduced by each party, with regard to the meaſures of ſubmiſſion due to ſovereigns.

As the obligation to juſtice is founded entirely on the intereſts of ſociety, which require mutual abſtinence from property, in order to preſerve peace among mankind; it is evident, that when the execution of juſtice would be attended with very pernicious conſequences, that virtue muſt be ſuſpended, and give place to public utility, in ſuch extraordinary and ſuch preſſing emergencies. The maxim, *fiat Juſtitia et ruat Cœlum*, "let juſtice be performed, though the "univerſe be deſtroyed," is apparently falſe; and by ſacrificing the end to the means, ſhows a prepoſterous idea of the ſubordination of duties. What governor of a town makes any ſcruple of burning the ſuburbs, when they facilitate the approaches of the enemy? Or what general abſtains from plundering a neutral country, when the neceſſities of war require it, and he cannot otherwiſe ſubſiſt his army? The caſe is the ſame with the duty of allegiance; and common ſenſe teaches us, that as government binds us to obedience only on account of its tendency to public utility, that duty muſt always, in extraordinary caſes, when pub-

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lic ruin would evidently attend obedience, yield to the primary and original obligation. *Salus populi ſuprema lex*, "The ſafety of the people is the ſupreme law." This maxim is agreeable to the ſentiments of mankind in all ages: Nor is any one, when he reads of the inſurrections againſt NERO or PHILIP the Second, ſo infatuated with party ſyſtems, as not to wiſh ſucceſs to the enterprize, and praiſe the undertakers. Even our high monarchical party, in ſpite of their ſublime theory, are forced, in ſuch caſes, to judge, and feel, and approve, in conformity to the reſt of mankind.

Reſiſtance, therefore, being admitted in extraordinary emergencies, the queſtion can only be among good reaſoners, with regard to the degree of neceſſity which can juſtify reſiſtance, and render it lawful or commendable. And here I muſt confeſs, that I ſhall always incline to their ſide who draw the bond of allegiance very cloſe, and conſider an infringement of it, as the laſt refuge in deſperate caſes, when the public is in the higheſt danger from violence and tyranny. For beſides the miſchiefs of a civil war which commonly attends inſurrection; it is certain, that where a diſpoſition to rebellion appears among any people, it is one chief cauſe of tyranny in the rulers, and forces them into many violent meaſures which they never would have embraced, had every one been inclined to ſubmiſſion and obedience. Thus the *tyrannicide* or aſſaſſination, approved of by ancient maxims, inſtead of keeping tyrants and uſurpers in awe, made them ten times more fierce and unrelenting; and is now juſtly, upon that account, aboliſhed by the laws of nations, and univerſally condemned as a baſe and treacherous method of bringing to juſtice theſe diſturbers of ſociety.

Beſides, we muſt conſider, that as obedience is our duty in the common courſe of things, it ought chiefly to be inculcated; nor can any thing be more prepoſterous than an anxious care and ſolicitude in ſta-

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ting all the cases in which resistance may be allowed. In like manner, though a philosopher reasonably acknowledges in the course of an argument, that the rules of justice may be dispensed with in cases of urgent necessity: What should we think of a preacher or casuist, who should make it his chief study to find out such cases, and enforce them with all the vehemence of argument and eloquence? Would he not be better employed in inculcating the general doctrine, than in displaying the particular exceptions, which, we are perhaps but too much inclined of ourselves, to embrace and to extend?

There are, however, two reasons which may be pleaded in defence of that party among us, who have, with so much industry, propagated the maxims of resistance; maxims which, it must be confessed, are, in general, so pernicious, and so destructive of civil society. The *first* is, that their antagonists carrying the doctrine of obedience to such an extravagant height, as not only never to mention the exceptions in extraordinary cases (which might, perhaps, be excusable), but even positively to exclude them; it became necessary to insist on these exceptions, and defend the rights of injured truth and liberty. The *second*, and, perhaps, better reason, is founded on the nature of the British constitution and form of government.

It is almost peculiar to our constitution to establish a first magistrate with such high pre-eminence and dignity, that, though limited by the laws, he is, in a manner, so far as regards his own person, above the laws, and can neither be questioned nor punished for any injury or wrong which may be committed by him. His ministers alone, or those who act by his commission, are obnoxious to justice; and while the prince is thus allured, by the prospect of personal safety, to give the laws their free course, an equal security is, in effect, obtained by the punishment of lesser offenders, and at the same time a civil war is avoided, which would

would be the infallible consequence, were an attack, at every turn, made directly upon the sovereign. But though the constitution pays this salutary complement to the prince, it can never reasonably be understood, by that maxim, to have determined its own destruction, or to have established a tame submission, where he protects his ministers, perseveres in injustice, and usurps the whole power of the commonwealth. This case, indeed, is never expressly put by the laws; because it is impossible for them, in their ordinary course, to provide a remedy for it, or establish any magistrate, with superior authority, to chastise the exorbitancies of the prince. But as a right without a remedy would be an absurdity, the remedy, in this case, is the extraordinary one of resistance, when affairs come to that extremity, that the constitution can be defended by it alone. Resistance therefore must, of course, become more frequent in the BRITISH government than in others which are simpler, and consist of fewer parts and movements. Where the king is an absolute sovereign, he has little temptation to commit such enormous tyranny as may justly provoke rebellion: But where he is limited, his imprudent ambition, without any great vices, may run him into that perilous situation. This is frequently supposed to have been the case with CHARLES the First; and if we may now speak truth, after animosities are ceased, this was also the case with JAMES the Second. These were harmless, if not, in their private character, good men; but mistaking the nature of our constitution, and engrossing the whole legislative power, it became necessary to oppose them with some vehemence; and even to deprive the latter formally of that authority, which he had used with such imprudence and indiscretion.

ESSAY

ESSAY XIV.

Of the COALITION of PARTIES.

TO abolish all distinctions of party may not be practicable, perhaps not desirable, in a free government. The only dangerous parties are such as entertain opposite views with regard to the essentials of government, the succession of the crown, or the more considerable privileges belonging to the several members of the constitution; where there is no room for any compromise or accommodation, and where the controversy may appear so momentous as to justify even an opposition by arms to the pretensions of antagonists. Of this nature was the animosity, continued for above a century past, between the parties in ENGLAND; an animosity which broke out sometimes into civil war, which occasioned violent revolutions, and which continually endangered the peace and tranquillity of the nation. But as there have appeared of late the strongest symptoms of an universal desire to abolish these party distinctions; this tendency to a coalition affords the most agreeable prospect of future happiness, and ought to be carefully cherished and promoted by every lover of his country.

There is not a more effectual method of promoting so good an end, than to prevent all unreasonable insult and triumph of the one party over the other, to encourage moderate opinions, to find the proper medium in all disputes, to persuade each that its antagonist may possibly be sometimes in the right, and to keep

keep a balance in the praiſe and blame which we beſtow on either ſide. The two former Eſſays, concerning the *original contract* and *paſſive obedience*, are calculated for this purpoſe with regard to the *philoſophical* and *practical* controverſies between the parties, and tend to ſhow that neither ſide are in theſe reſpects ſo fully ſupported by reaſon, as they endeavour to flatter themſelves. We ſhall proceed to exerciſe the ſame moderation with regard to the *hiſtorical* diſputes between the parties, by proving that each of them was juſtified by plauſible topics; that there were on both ſides wiſe men who meant well to their country; and that the paſt animoſity between the factions had no better foundation than narrow prejudice or intereſted paſſion.

The popular party, who afterwards acquired the name of whigs, might juſtify, by very ſpecious arguments, that oppoſition to the crown, from which our preſent free conſtitution is derived. Though obliged to acknowledge, that precedents in favour of prerogative had uniformly taken place during many reigns before CHARLES the Firſt, they thought, that there was no reaſon for ſubmitting any longer to ſo dangerous an authority. Such might have been their reaſoning: As the rights of mankind are for ever to be deemed ſacred, no preſcription of tyranny or arbitrary power can have authority ſufficient to aboliſh them. Liberty is a bleſſing ſo ineſtimable, that wherever there appears any probability of recovering it, a nation may willingly run many hazards, and ought not even to repine at the greateſt effuſion of blood or diſſipation of treaſure. All human inſtitutions, and none more than government, are in continual fluctuation. Kings are ſure to embrace every opportunity of extending their prerogatives; and if favourable incidents be not alſo laid hold of for extending and ſecuring the privileges of the people, an univerſal deſpotiſm muſt for ever prevail amongſt mankind. The example of all the neighbouring nations proves, that

it is no longer safe to entrust with the crown the same high prerogatives which had formerly been exercised during rude and simple ages. And though the example of many late reigns may be pleaded in favour of a power in the prince somewhat arbitrary, more remote reigns afford instances of stricter limitations imposed on the crown; and those pretensions of the parliament, now branded with the title of innovations, are only a recovery of the just rights of the people.

These views, far from being odious, are surely large, and generous, and noble: To their prevalence and success the kingdom owes its liberty; perhaps its learning, its industry, commerce, and naval power: By them chiefly the ENGLISH name is distinguished among the society of nations, and aspires to a rivalship with that of the freest and most illustrious commonwealths of antiquity. But as all these mighty consequences could not reasonably be foreseen at the time when the contest began, the royalists of that age wanted not specious arguments on their side, by which they could justify their defence of the then established prerogatives of the prince. We shall state the question as it might have appeared to them at the assembling of that parliament, which, by its violent encroachments on the crown, began the civil wars.

The only rule of government, they might have said, known and acknowledged among men, is use and practice: Reason is so uncertain a guide, that it will always be exposed to doubt and controversy: Could it ever render itself prevalent over the people, men had always retained it as their sole rule of conduct: They had still continued in the primitive, unconnected state of nature, without submitting to political government, whose sole basis is, not pure reason, but authority and precedent. Dissolve these ties, you break all the bonds of civil society, and leave every man at liberty to consult his private interest, by those expedients, which his appetite, disguised under the appearance of reason, shall dictate to him. The spi-

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rit of innovation is in itſelf pernicious, however favourable its particular object may ſometimes appear: A truth ſo obvious, that the popular party themſelves are ſenſible of it; and therefore cover their encroachments on the crown by the plauſible pretence of their recovering the ancient liberties of the people.

But the preſent prerogatives of the crown, allowing all the ſuppoſitions of that party, have been inconteſtibly eſtabliſhed ever ſince the acceſſion of the Houſe of TUDOR; a period which, as it now comprehends a hundred and ſixty years, may be allowed ſufficient to give ſtability to any conſtitution. Would it not have appeared ridiculous, in the reign of the Emperor ADRIAN, to have talked of the republican conſtitution as the rule of government; or to have ſuppoſed that the former rights of the ſenate, and conſuls, and tribunes, were ſtill ſubſiſting?

But the preſent claims of the ENGLISH monarchs are much more favourable than thoſe of the ROMAN emperors during that age. The authority of AUGUSTUS was a plain uſurpation, grounded only on military violence, and forms ſuch an epoch in the ROMAN hiſtory as is obvious to every reader. But if HENRY VII. really, as ſome pretend, enlarged the power of the crown, it was only by inſenſible acquiſitions which eſcaped the apprehenſion of the people, and have ſcarcely been remarked even by hiſtorians and politicians. The new government, if it deſerve the epithet, is an imperceptible tranſition from the former; is entirely engrafted on it; derives its title fully from that root; and is to be conſidered only as one of thoſe gradual revolutions, to which human affairs, in every nation, will be for ever ſubject.

The Houſe of TUDOR, and after them that of STUART, exerciſed no prerogatives, but what had been claimed and exerciſed by the PLANTAGENETS. Not a ſingle branch of their authority can be ſaid to be an innovation. The only difference is, that, perhaps, former kings exerted theſe powers only by in-

tervals, and were not able, by reaſon of the oppoſition of their barons, to render them ſo ſteady a rule of adminiſtration. But the ſole inference from this fact is, that thoſe ancient times were more turbulent and ſeditious; and that royal authority, the conſtitution, and the laws, have happily of late gained the aſcendant.

Under what pretence can the popular party now ſpeak of recovering the ancient conſtitution? The former control over the kings was not placed in the commons, but in the barons: The people had no authority, and even little or no liberty; till the crown, by ſuppreſſing theſe factious tyrants, enforced the execution of the laws, and obliged all the ſubjects equally to reſpect each others rights, privileges, and properties. If we muſt return to the ancient barbarous and feudal conſtitution; let thoſe gentlemen, who now behave themſelves with ſo much inſolence to their ſovereign, ſet the firſt example. Let them make court to be admitted as retainers to a neighbouring baron; and by ſubmitting to ſlavery under him, acquire ſome protection to themſelves; together with the power of exerciſing rapine and oppreſſion over their inferior ſlaves and villains. This was the condition of the commons among their remote anceſtors.

But how far back muſt we go, in having recourſe to ancient conſtitutions and governments? There was a conſtitution ſtill more ancient than that to which theſe innovators affect ſo much to appeal. During that period there was no *magna charta:* The barons themſelves poſſeſſed few regular, ſtated priviliges: And the houſe of commons probably had not an exiſtence.

It is ridiculous to hear the commons, while they are aſſuming, by uſurpation, the whole power of government, talk of reviving ancient inſtitutions. Is it not known, that, though repreſentatives received wages from their conſtituents; to be a member of the

lower houſe was always conſidered as a burden, and an exemption from it as a privilege? Will they perſuade us, that power, which, of all human acquiſitions, is the moſt coveted, and in compariſon of which even reputation and pleaſure and riches are ſlighted, could ever be regarded as a burden by any man?

The property, acquired of late by the commons, it is ſaid, intitles them to more power than their anceſtors enjoyed. But to what is this encreaſe of their property owing, but to an encreaſe of their liberty and their ſecurity? Let them therefore ackowledge, that their anceſtors, while the crown was reſtrained by the ſeditious barons, really enjoyed leſs liberty than they themſelves have attained, after the ſovereign acquired the aſcendant: And let them enjoy that liberty with moderation; and not forfeit it by new exorbitant claims, and by rendering it a pretence for endleſs innovations.

The true rule of government is the preſent eſtabliſhed practice of the age. That has moſt authority, becauſe it is recent: It is alſo beſt known, for the ſame reaſon. Who has aſſured thoſe tribunes, that the PLANTAGENETS did not exerciſe as high acts of authority as the TUDORS? Hiſtorians, they ſay, do not mention them. But hiſtorians are alſo ſilent with regard to the chief exertions of prerogative by the TUDORS. Where any power or prerogative is fully and undoubtedly eſtabliſhed, the exerciſe of it paſſes for a thing of courſe, and readily eſcapes the notice of hiſtory and annals. Had we no other monuments of ELIZABETH's reign, than what are preſerved even by CAMDEN, the moſt copious, judicious, and exact of our hiſtorians, we ſhould be entirely ignorant of the moſt important maxims of her government.

Was not the preſent monarchical government, in its full extent, authorized by lawyers, recommended by divines, acknowledged by politicians, acquiſced in, nay paſſionately cheriſhed, by the people in general; and all this during a period of at leaſt a hundred

dred and ſixty years, and till of late, without the ſmalleſt murmur or controverſy? This general conſent ſurely, during ſo long a time, muſt be ſufficient to render a conſtitution legal and valid. If the origin of all power be derived, as is pretended, from the people; here is their conſent in the fulleſt and moſt ample terms that can be deſired or imagined.

But the people muſt not pretend, becauſe they can, by their conſent, lay the foundations of government, that therefore they are to be permitted, at their pleaſure, to overthrow and ſubvert them. There is no end of theſe ſeditious and arrogant claims. The power of the crown is now openly ſtruck at: The nobility are alſo in viſible peril: The gentry will ſoon follow: The popular leaders, who will then aſſume the name of gentry, will next be expoſed to danger: And the people themſelves, having become incapable of civil government, and lying under the reſtraint of no authority, muſt, for the ſake of peace, admit, inſtead of their legal and mild monarchs, a ſucceſſion of military and deſpotic tyrants.

Theſe conſequences are the more to be dreaded, as the preſent fury of the people, though gloſſed over by pretenſions to civil liberty, is in reality incited by the fanaticiſm of religion; a principle the moſt blind, headſtrong, and ungovernable, by which human nature can poſſibly be actuated. Popular rage is dreadful, from whatever motive derived: But muſt be attended with the moſt pernicious conſequences, when it ariſes from a principle, which diſclaims all control by human law, reaſon, or authority.

Theſe are the arguments which each party may make uſe of to juſtify the conduct of their predeceſſors during that great criſis. The event, if that can be admitted as a reaſon, has ſhown, that the arguments of the popular party were better founded; but perhaps, according to the eſtabliſhed maxims of lawyers and politicians, the views of the royaliſts ought, be-

fore-hand, to have appeared more ſolid, more ſafe, and more legal. But this is certain, that the greater moderation we now employ in repreſenting paſt events, the nearer ſhall we be to produce a full coalition of the parties, and an entire acquiſcence in our preſent eſtabliſhment. Moderation is of advantage to every eſtabliſhment: Nothing but zeal can overturn a ſettled power: And an over-active zeal in friends is apt to beget a like ſpirit in antagoniſts. The tranſition from a moderate oppoſition againſt an eſtabliſhment, to an entire acquiſcence in it, is eaſy and inſenſible.

There are many invincible arguments, which ſhould induce the malcontent party to acquiſce entirely in the preſent ſettlement of the conſtitution. They now find, that the ſpirit of civil liberty, though at firſt connected with religious fanaticiſm, could purge itſelf from that pollution, and appear under a more genuine and engaging aſpect; a friend to toleration, and an encourager of all the enlarged and generous ſentiments that do honour to human nature. They may obſerve, that the popular claims could ſtop at a proper period; and after retrenching the high claims of prerogative, could ſtill maintain a due reſpect to monarchy, to nobility, and to all ancient inſtitutions. Above all, they muſt be ſenſible, that the very principle, which made the ſtrength of their party, and from which it derived its chief authority, has now deſerted them, and gone over to their antagoniſts, The plan of liberty is ſettled; its happy effects are proved by experience; a long tract of time has given it ſtability; and whoever would attempt to overturn it, and to recal the paſt government or abdicated family, would, beſides other more criminal imputations, be expoſed, in their turn, to the reproach of faction and innovation. While they peruſe the hiſtory of paſt events, they ought to reflect, both that thoſe rights of the crown are long ſince annihilated, and that the tyranny, and violence, and oppreſſion,

to

to which they often gave rise, are ills, from which the established liberty of the constitution has now at last happily protected the people. These reflections will prove a better security to our freedom and privileges, than to deny, contrary to the clearest evidence of facts, that such regal powers ever had an existence. There is not a more effectual method of betraying a cause, than to lay the stress of the argument on a wrong place, and by disputing an untenable post, enure the adversaries to success and victory.

ESSAY XV.

Of the PROTESTANT SUCCESSION.

I SUPPOSE, that a member of parliament in the reign of King WILLIAM or Queen ANNE, while the establishment of the *Protestant Succession* was yet uncertain, were deliberating concerning the party he would choose in that important question, and weighing, with impartiality, the advantages and disadvantages on each side: I believe the following particulars would have entered into his consideration.

He would easily perceive the great advantage resulting from the restoration of the STUART family; by which we should preserve the succession clear and undisputed, free from a pretender, with such a specious title as that of blood, which, with the multitude, is always the claim, the strongest and most easily comprehended. It is in vain to say, as many have done, that the question with regard to *governors*, independent of *government*, is frivolous, and little worth disputing, much less fighting about.

The generality of mankind never will enter into theſe ſentiments; and it is much happier, I believe, for ſociety, that they do not, but rather continue in their natural prepoſſeſſions. How could ſtability be preſerved in any monarchical government (which, though, perhaps, not the beſt, is, and always has been, the moſt common of any), unleſs men had ſo paſſionate a regard for the true heir of their royal family; and even though he be weak in underſtanding, or infirm in years, gave him ſo ſenſible a preference above perſons the moſt acompliſhed in ſhining talents, or celebrated for great atchievements? Would not every popular leader put in his claim at every vacancy, or even without any vacancy; and the kingdom become the theatre of perpetual wars and convulſions? The condition of the ROMAN empire, ſurely, was not, in this reſpect, much to be envied; nor is that of the *Eaſtern* nations, who pay little regard to the titles of their ſovereign, but ſacrifice them, every day, to the caprice or momentary humour of the populace or ſoldiery. It is but a fooliſh wiſdom, which is ſo carefully diſplayed, in undervaluing princes, and placing them on a level with the meaneſt of mankind. To be ſure, an anatomiſt finds no more in the greateſt monarch than in the loweſt peaſent or day-labourer; and a moraliſt may, perhaps, frequently find leſs. But what do all theſe reflections tend to? We, all of us, ſtill retain theſe prejudices in favour of birth and family; and neither in our ſerious occupations, nor moſt careleſs amuſements, can we ever get entirely rid of them. A tragedy, that ſhould repreſent the adventures of ſailors, or porters, or even of private gentlemen, would preſently diſguſt us; but one that introduces kings and princes, acquires in our eyes an air of importance and dignity. Or ſhould a man be able, by his ſuperior wiſdom, to get entirely above ſuch prepoſſeſſions, he would ſoon, by means of the ſame wiſdom, again bring himſelf down to them, for the

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ſake of ſociety, whoſe welfare he would perceive to be intimately connected with them. Far from endeavouring to undeceive the people in this particular, he would cheriſh ſuch ſentiments of reverence to their princes, as requiſite to preſerve a due ſubordination in ſociety. And though the lives of twenty thouſand men be often ſacrificed to maintain a king in poſſeſſion of his throne, or preſerve the right of ſucceſſion undiſturbed, he entertains no indignation at the loſs, on pretence that every individual of theſe was, perhaps, in himſelf, as valuable as the prince he ſerved. He conſiders the conſequences of violating the hereditary right of kings: Conſequences which may be felt for many centuries; while the loſs of ſeveral thouſand men brings ſo little prejudice to a large kingdom, that it may not be perceived a few years after.

The advantages of the HANOVER ſucceſſion are of an oppoſite nature, and ariſe from this very circumſtance, that it violates hereditary right; and places on the throne a prince, to whom birth gave no title to that dignity. It is evident, from the hiſtory of this iſland, that the privileges of the people have, during near two centuries, been continually upon the encreaſe, by the diviſion of the church-lands, by the alienations of the barons eſtates, by the progreſs of trade, and above all, by the happineſs of our ſituation; which, for a long time, gave us ſufficient ſecurity, without any ſtanding army or military eſtabliſhment. On the contrary, public liberty has, almoſt in every other nation of EUROPE, been, during the ſame period, extremely upon the decline; while the people were diſguſted at the hardſhips of the old feudal militia, and rather choſe to entruſt their prince with mercenary armies, which he eaſily turned againſt themſelves. It was nothing extraordinary, therefore, that ſome of our BRITISH ſovereigns miſtook the nature of the conſtitution, at leaſt the genius of the people; and as they embraced all the favour-

able precedents left them by their anceſtors, they overlooked all thoſe which were contrary, and which ſuppoſed a limitation in our government. They were encouraged in this miſtake, by the example of all the nighbouring princes, who, bearing the ſame title or appellation, and being adorned with the ſame enſigns of authority, naturally led them to claim the ſame powers and prerogatives. It appears from the ſpeeches and proclamations of JAMES I. and the whole train of that prince's actions, as well as his ſon's, that he regarded the ENGLISH government as a ſimple monarchy, and never imagined that any conſiderable part of his ſubjects entertained a contrary idea. This opinion made thoſe monarchs diſcover their pretenſions without preparing any force to ſupport them; and even without reſerve or diſguiſe, which are always employed by thoſe who enter upon any new project, or endeavour to innovate in any government. The flattery of courtiers farther confirmed their prejudices; and above all, that of the clergy, who from ſeveral paſſages of *ſcripture*, and theſe wreſted too, had erected a regular and avowed ſyſtem of arbitrary power. The only method of deſtroying, at once, all theſe high claims and pretenſions, was to depart from the true hereditary line, and chooſe a prince, who, being plainly a creature of the public, and receiving the crown on conditions, expreſſed and avowed, found his authority eſtabliſhed on the ſame bottom with the privileges of the people. By electing him in the royal line, we cut off all hopes of ambitious ſubjects, who might, in future emergencies, diſturb the government by their cabals and pretenſions: By rendering the crown hereditary in his family, we avoided all the inconveniences of elective monarchy; and by excluding the lineal heir, we ſecured all our conſtitutional limitations, and rendered our government uniform and of a piece. The people cheriſh monarchy, becauſe protected by it: The monarch favours liberty, becauſe created by it. And thus every advan-

tage is obtained by the new eſtabliſhment, as far as human ſkill and wiſdom can extend itſelf.

Theſe are the ſeparate advantages of fixing the ſucceſſion, either in the houſe of STUART or in that of HANOVER. There are alſo diſadvantages in each eſtabliſhment, which an impartial patriot would ponder and examine, in order to form a juſt judgment upon the whole.

The diſadvantages of the proteſtant ſucceſſion conſiſt in the foreign dominions, which are poſſeſſed by the princes of the HANOVER line, and which, it might be ſuppoſed, would engage us in the intrigues and wars of the continent, and loſe us, in ſome meaſure, the ineſtimable advantage we poſſeſs, of being ſurrounded and guarded by the ſea, which we command. The diſadvantages of recalling the abdicated family, conſiſt chiefly in their religion, which is more prejudicial to ſociety than that eſtabliſhed amongſt us is contrary to it, and affords on toleration, or peace or ſecurity to any other communion.

It appears to me, that theſe advantages and diſadvantages are allowed on both ſides; at leaſt by every one who is at all ſuſceptable of argument or reaſoning. No ſubject, however loyal, pretends to deny, that the diſputed title and foreign dominions of the preſent royal family are a loſs. Nor is there any partizan of the STUARTS, but will confeſs, that the claim of hereditary, indefeaſible right, and the Roman Catholic religion, are alſo diſadvantages in that family. It belongs, therefore, to a philoſopher alone, who is of neither party, to put all the circumſtances in the ſcale, and aſſign to each of them its proper poiſe and influence. Such a one will readily, at firſt, acknowledge, that all political queſtions are infinitely complicated, and that there ſcarcely ever occurs, in any deliberation, a choice, which is either purely good or purely ill. Conſequences, mixed and varied, may be foreſeen to flow from every meaſure: And many conſequences, unforeſeen, do always, in fact, reſult from every one. Heſitation, and reſerve, and ſuſpence, are,

are, therefore, the only ſentiments he brings to this eſſay or trial. Or if he indulges any paſſion, it is that of deriſion againſt the ignorant multitude, who are always clamorous and dogmatical, even in the niceſt queſtions, of which, from want of temper, perhaps ſtill more than of underſtanding, they are altogether unfit judges.

But to ſay ſomething more determinate on this head, the following reflections will, I hope, ſhow the temper, if not the underſtanding, of a philoſopher.

Were we to judge merely by firſt appearances, and by paſt experience, we muſt allow that the advantages of a parliamentary title in the houſe of HANOVER are greater than thoſe of an undiſputed hereditary title in the houſe of STUART; and that our fathers acted wiſely in preferring the former to the latter. So long as the houſe of STUART ruled in GREAT BRITAIN, which, with ſome interruption, was above eighty years, the government was kept in a continual fever, by the contention between the privileges of the people and the prerogatives of the crown. If arms were dropped, the noiſe of diſputes continued: Or if theſe were ſilenced, jealouſy ſtill corroded the heart, and threw the nation into an unnatural ferment and diſorder. And while we were thus occupied in domeſtic diſputes, a foreign power, dangerous to public liberty, erected itſelf in EUROPE, without any oppoſition from us, and even ſometimes with our aſſiſtance.

But during theſe laſt ſixty years, when a parliamentary eſtabliſhment has taken place; whatever factions may have prevailed either among the people or in public aſſemblies, the whole force of our conſtitution has always fallen to one ſide, and an uninterrupted harmony has been preſerved between our princes and our parliaments. Public liberty, with internal peace and order, has flouriſhed almoſt without interruption: Trade and manufactures and agriculture have encreaſed: The arts, and ſciences, and philoſophy,

philoſophy, have been cultivated. Even religious parties have been neceſſitated to lay aſide their mutual rancour: And the glory of the nation has ſpread itſelf all over EUROPE; derived equally from our progreſs in the arts of peace, and from valour and ſucceſs in war. So long and ſo glorious a period no nation almoſt can boaſt of: Nor is there another inſtance in the whole hiſtory of mankind, that ſo many milions of people have, during ſuch a ſpace of time, been held together, in a manner ſo free, ſo rational, and ſo ſuitable to the dignity of human nature.

But though this recent experience ſeems clearly to decide in favour of the preſent eſtabliſhment, there are ſome circumſtances to be thrown into the other ſcale; and it is dangerous to regulate our judgment by one event or example.

We have had two rebellions during the flouriſhing period above mentioned, beſides plots and conſpiracies without number. And if none of theſe have produced any very fatal event, we may aſcribe our eſcape chiefly to the narrow genius of thoſe princes who diſputed our eſtabliſhment; and we may eſteem ourſelves ſo far fortunate. But the claims of the baniſhed family, I fear, are not yet antiquated; and who can foretel, that their future attempts will produce no greater diſorder?

The diſputes between privilege and prerogative may eaſily be compoſed by laws, and votes, and conferences, and conceſſions: where there is tolerable temper or prudence on both ſides, or on either ſide. Among contending titles, the queſtion can only be determined by the ſword, and by devaſtation, and by civil war.

A prince, who fills the throne with a diſputed title, dares not arm his ſubjects; the only method of ſecuring a people fully, both againſt domeſtic oppreſſion and foreign conqueſt.

Notwithſtanding our riches and renown, what a critical eſcape did we make, by the late peace, from dangers,

dangers, which were owing not ſo much to bad conduct and ill ſucceſs in war, as to the pernicious practice of mortgaging our finances, and the ſtill more pernicious maxim of never paying off our incumbrances? Such fatal meaſures would not probably have been embraced, had it not been to ſecure a precarious eſtabliſhment.

But to convince us, that an hereditary title is to be embraced rather than a parliamentary one, which is not ſupported by any other views or motives; a man needs only tranſport himſelf back to the æra of the reſtoration, and ſuppoſe, that he had had a ſeat in that parliament which recalled the royal family, and put a period to the greateſt diſorders that ever aroſe from the oppoſite pretenſions of prince and people. What would have been thought of one, that had propoſed at that time, to ſet aſide CHARLES II. and ſettle the crown on the Duke of YORK or GLOUCESTER, merely in order to exclude all high claims, like thoſe of their father and grandfather? Would not ſuch a one have been regarded as an extravagant projector, who loved dangerous remedies, and could tamper and play with a government and national conſtitution, like a quack with a ſickly patient?

In reality, the reaſon aſſigned by the nation for excluding the race of STUART, and ſo many other branches of the royal family, is not on account of their hereditary title (a reaſon which would, to vulgar apprehenſions, have appeared altogether abſurd), but on account of their religion. Which leads us to compare the diſadvantages above mentioned in each eſtabliſhment.

I confeſs, that, conſidering the matter in general, it were much to be wiſhed, that our prince had no foreign dominions, and could confine all his attention to the government of this iſland. For not to mention ſome real inconveniences that may reſult from territories on the continent, they afford ſuch a handle for calumny and defamation, as is greedily ſeized by

by the people, always diſpoſed to think ill of their ſuperiors. It muſt, however, be acknowledged, that HANOVER, is, perhaps, the ſpot of ground in EUROPE the leaſt inconvenient for a King in ENGLAND. It lies in the heart of GERMANY, at a diſtance from the great powers, which are our natural rivals: It is protected by the laws of the empire, as well as by the arms of its own ſovereign: And it ſerves only to connect us more cloſely with the houſe of AUSTRIA, our natural ally.

The religious perſuaſion of the houſe of STUART is an inconvenience of a much deeper dye, and would threaten us with much more diſmal conſequences. The Roman Catholic religion, with its train of prieſts and friars, is more expenſive than ours: Even though unaccompanied with its natural attendants of inquiſitors, and ſtakes, and gibbets, it is leſs tolerating: And not content with dividing the ſacerdotal from the regal office (which muſt be prejudicial to any ſtate), it beſtows the former on a foreigner, who has always a ſeparate intereſt from that of the public, and may often have an oppoſite one.

But were this religion ever ſo advantageous to ſociety, it is contrary to that which is eſtabliſhed among us, and which is likely to keep poſſeſſion, for a long time, of the minds of the people. And though it is much to be hoped, that the progreſs of reaſon will, by degrees, abate the acrimony of oppoſite religions all over EUROPE; yet the ſpirit of moderation has, as yet, made too ſlow advances to be entirely truſted.

Thus, upon the whole, the advantages of the ſettlement in the family of STUART, which frees us from a diſputed title, ſeem to bear ſome proportion with thoſe of the ſettlement in the family of HANOVER, which frees us from the claims of prerogative: But at the ſame time, its diſadvantages, by placing on the throne a Roman Catholic, are greater than thoſe

of

of the other eſtabliſhment, in ſettling the crown on a foreign prince. What party an impartial patriot in the reign of K. WILLIAM or Q. ANNE, would have choſen amidſt theſe oppoſite views, may, perhaps, to ſome appear hard to determine.

But the ſettlement in the houſe of HANOVER has actually taken place. The princes of that family, without intrigue, without cabal, without ſolicitation on their part, have been called to mount our throne, by the united voice of the whole legiſlative body. They have, ſince their acceſſion, diſplayed in all their actions, the utmoſt mildneſs, equity, and regard to the laws and conſtitution. Our own miniſters, our own parliaments, ourſelves have governed us; and if aught ill has befallen us, we can only blame fortune or ourſelves. What a reproach muſt we become among nations, if, diſguſted with a ſettlement ſo deliberately made, and whoſe conditions have been ſo religiouſly obſerved, we ſhould throw every thing again into confuſion, and by our levity and rebellious diſpoſition, prove ourſelves totally unfit for any ſtate but that of abſolute ſlavery and ſubjection?

The greateſt inconvenience attending a diſputed title is, that it brings us in danger of civil wars and rebellions. What wiſe man, to avoid this inconvenience, would run directly into a civil war and rebellion? Not to mention, that ſo long poſſeſſion, ſecured by ſo many laws, muſt, ere this time, in the apprehenſion of a great part of the nation, have begotten a title in the houſe of HANOVER, independent of their preſent poſſeſſion: So that now we ſhould not, even by a revolution, obtain the end of avoiding a diſputed title.

No revolution made by national forces, will ever be able, without ſome other great neceſſity, to aboliſh our debts and incumbrances, in which the intereſt of ſo many perſons is concerned. And a revolution made by foreign forces, is a conqueſt: A calamity,

with which the precarious balance of power threatens us, and which our civil diſſentions are likely, above all other circumſtances, to bring upon us.

ESSAY XVI.

IDEA of a PERFECT COMMONWEALTH.

IT is not with forms of government as with other artificial contrivances, where an old engine may be rejected, if we can diſcover another more accurate and commodious; or where trials may ſafely be made, even though the ſucceſs be doubtful. An eſtabliſhed government has an infinite advantage, by that very circumſtance, of its being eſtabliſhed; the bulk of mankind being governed by authority, not reaſon, and never attributing authority to any thing that has not the recommendation of antiquity. To tamper, therefore, in this affair, or try experiments merely upon the credit of ſuppoſed argument and philoſophy, can never be the part of a wiſe magiſtrate, who will bear a reverence to what carries the marks of age; and though he may attempt ſome improvements for the public good, yet will he adjuſt his innovations as much as poſſible to the ancient fabric, and preſerve entire the chief pillars and ſupports of the conſtitution.

The mathematicians in EUROPE have been much divided concerning that figure of a ſhip, which is the moſt commodious for ſailing; and HUYGENS, who at laſt determined the controverſy, is juſtly thought to have obliged the learned as well as commercial world; though COLUMBUS had ſailed to AMERICA, and SIR FRANCIS DRAKE made the tour of the world, without

without any such discovery. As one form of government must be allowed more perfect than another, independent of the manners and humours of particular men; why may we not enquire what is the most perfect of all, though the common botched and inaccurate governments seem to serve the purposes of society, and though it be not so easy to establish a new system of government, as to build a vessel upon a new construction? The subject is surely the most worthy curiosity of any the wit of man can possibly devise. And who knows, if this controversy were fixed by the universal consent of the wise and learned; but, in some future age, an opportunity might be afforded of reducing the theory to practice, either by a dissolution of some old government, or by the combination of men to form a new one in some distant part of the world? In all cases, it must be advantageous to know what is most perfect in the kind, that we may be able to bring any real constitution or form of government as near it as possible, by such gentle alterations and innovations as may not give too great disturbance to society.

All I pretend to in the present essay is, to revive this subject of speculation; and therefore I shall deliver my sentiments in as few words as possible. A long dissertation on that head would not, I apprehend, be very acceptable to the public, who will be apt to regard such disquisitions both as useless and chimerical.

All plans of government, which suppose great reformation in the manners of mankind, are plainly imaginary. Of this nature are the *Republic* of PLATO, and the *Utopia* of Sir THOMAS MORE. The OCEANA is the only valuable model of a commonwealth that has yet been offered to the public.

The chief defects of the OCEANA seem to be these. *First*, Its rotation is inconvenient, by throwing men, of whatever abilities, by intervals, out of public employment. *Secondly*, Its *Agrarian* is impracticable. Men

Men will ſoon learn the art which was practiſed in ancient ROME, of concealing their poſſeſſions under other people's name; till at laſt the abuſe will become ſo common, that they will throw off even the appearance of reſtraint. *Thirdly*, The OCEANA provides not a ſufficient ſecurity for liberty, or the redreſs of grievances. The ſenate muſt propoſe, and the people conſent; by which means, the ſenate have not only a negative upon the people, but, what is of much greater conſequence, their negative goes before the votes of the people. Were the King's negative of the ſame nature in the ENGLISH conſtitution, and could he prevent any bill from coming into parliament, he would be an abſolute monarch. As his negative follows the votes of the houſes, it is of little conſequence: Such a difference is there in the manner of placing the ſame thing. When a popular bill has been debated in parliament, is brought to maturity, all its conveniences and inconveniences, weighed and balanced; if afterwards it be preſented for the royal aſſent, few princes will venture to reject the unanimous deſire of the people. But could the King cruſh a diſagreeable bill in embryo (as was the caſe, for ſome time, in the SCOTTISH parliament, by means of the lords of the articles), the BRITISH government would have no balance, nor would grievances ever be redreſſed; and it is certain, that exorbitant power proceeds not, in any government, from new laws, ſo much as from neglecting to remedy the abuſes which frequently riſe from the old ones. A government, ſays MACHIAVEL, muſt often be brought back to its original principles. It appears then, that, in the OCEANA, the whole legiſlature may be ſaid to reſt in the ſenate, which HARRINGTON would own to be an inconvenient form of government, eſpecially after the *Agrarian* is aboliſhed.

Here is a form of government, to which I cannot, in theory, diſcover any conſiderable objection.

Let GREAT BRITAIN and IRELAND, or any territory of equal extent, be divided into 100 counties, and each county into 100 parishes, making in all 10,000. If the country, proposed to be erected into a commonwealth, be of more narrow extent, we may diminish the number of counties; but never bring them below thirty. If it be of greater extent, it were better to enlarge the parishes, or throw more parishes into a county, than encrease the number of counties.

Let all the freeholders of twenty pounds a-year in the county, and all the householders worth 500 pounds in the town parishes, meet annually in the parish church, and choose by ballot, some freeholder of the county for their member, whom we shall call the county *representative*.

Let the 100 county representatives, two days after their election, meet in the county town, and choose by ballot, from their own body, ten county *magistrates* and one *senator*. There are, therefore, in the whole commonwealth, 100 senators, 1100 county magistrates, and 10,000 county representatives. For we shall bestow on all senators the authority of county magistrates, and on all county magistrates the authority of county representatives.

Let the senators meet in the capital, and be endowed with the whole executive power of the commonwealth, the power of peace and war, of giving orders to generals, admirals, and ambassadors; and, in short, all the prerogatives of a BRITISH King, except his negative.

Let the county representatives meet in their particular counties, and possess the whole legislative power of the commonwealth; the greater number of counties deciding the question; and where these are equal, let the senate have the casting vote.

Every new law must first be debated in the senate; and though rejected by it, if ten senators insist and protest, it must be sent down to the counties. The

senate,

ſenate, if they pleaſe, may join to the copy of the law their reaſons for receiving or rejecting it.

Becauſe it would be troubleſome to aſſemble all the county repreſentatives for every trivial law that may be requiſite, the ſenate have their choice of ſending down the law either to the county magiſtrates or county repreſentatives.

The magiſtrates, though the law be referred to them, may, if they pleaſe, call the repreſentatives, and ſubmit the affair to their determination.

Whether the law be referred by the ſenate to the county magiſtrates or repreſentatives, a copy of it, and of the ſenate's reaſons, muſt be ſent to every repreſentative eight days before the day appointed for the aſſembling, in order to deliberate concerning it; and though the determination be, by the ſenate, referred to the magiſtrates, if five repreſentatives of the county order the magiſtrates to aſſemble the whole court of repreſentatives, and ſubmit the affair to their determination, they muſt obey.

Either the county magiſtrates or repreſentatives may give to the ſenator of the county the copy of a law to be propoſed to the ſenate; and if five counties concur in the ſame order, the law, though refuſed by the ſenate, muſt come either to the county magiſtrates or repreſentatives as is contained in the order of the five counties.

Any twenty counties, by a vote either of their magiſtrates or repreſentatives, may throw any man out of all public offices for a year. Thirty counties for three years.

The ſenate has a power of throwing out any member or number of members of its own body, not to be re-elected for that year. The ſenate cannot throw out twice in a year the ſenator of the ſame county.

The power of the old ſenate continues for three weeks after the annual election of the county repreſentatives. Then all the new ſenators are ſhut up in a conclave like the cardinals; and by an intricate

ballot such as that of VENICE or MALTA, they chuse the following magistrates; a protector who represents the dignity of the commonwealth, and presides in the senate; two secretaries of state; these six coucils, a council of state, a council of religion and learning, a council of trade, a council of laws, a council of war, a council of the admiralty, each council consisting of five persons, together with six commissioners of the treasury and a first commissioner. All these must be senators. The senate also names all the ambassadors to foreign courts, who may either be senators or not.

The senate may continue any or all of these, but must re-elect them every year.

The protector and two secretaries have session and suffrage in the council of state. The business of that council is all foreign politics. The council of state has session and suffrage in all the other councils.

The council of religion and learning inspects the universities and clergy. That of trade inspects every thing that may affect commerce. That of laws inspects all the abuses of law by the inferior magistrates, and examines what improvements may be made of the municipal law. That of war inspects the militia and its discipline, magazines, stores, *&c.* and when the republic is in war, examines into the proper orders for generals. The council of admiralty has the same power with regard to the navy, together with the nomination of the captains and all inferior officers.

None of these councils can give orders themselves, except where they receive such powers from the senate. In other cases, they must communicate every thing to the senate.

When the senate is under adjournment, any of the councils may assemble it before the day appointed for its meeting.

Besides these councils or courts, there is another called the court of *competitors*; which is thus constituted. If any candidates for the office of senator have

have more votes than a third of the repreſentatives, that candidate, who has moſt votes, next to the ſenator elected, becomes incapable for one year of all public offices, even of being a magiſtrate or repreſentative: But he takes his ſeat in the court of competitors. Here then is a court which may ſometimes conſiſt of a hundred members, ſometimes have no members at all; and by that means, be for a year aboliſhed.

The court of competitors has no power in the commonwealth. It has only the inſpection of public accounts, and the accuſing of any man before the ſenate. If the ſenate acquit him, the court of competitors may, if they pleaſe, appeal to the people, either magiſtrates or repreſentatives. Upon that appeal, the magiſtrates or repreſentatives meet on the day appointed by the court of competitors, and chooſe in each county three perſons; from which number every ſenator is excluded. Theſe, to the number of 300, meet in the capital, and bring the perſon accuſed to a new trial.

The court of competitors may propoſe any law to the ſenate; and if refuſed, may appeal to the people, that is, to the magiſtrates or repreſentatives, who examine it in their counties. Every ſenator, who is thrown out of the ſenate by a vote of the court, takes his ſeat in the court of competitors.

The ſenate poſſeſſes all the judicative authority of the houſe of Lords, that is all the appeals from the inferior courts. It likewiſe appoints the Lord Chancellor, and all the officers of the law.

Every county is a kind of republic within itſelf, and the repreſentatives may make bye-laws; which have no authority till three months after they are voted. A copy of the law is ſent to the ſenate, and to every other county. The ſenate, or any ſingle county, may, at any time, annul any bye-law of another county.

The repreſentatives have all the authority of the BRITISH juſtices of peace in trials, commitments, &c.

The magiſtrates have the appointment of all the officers of the revenue in each county. All cauſes with regard to the revenue are carried ultimately by appeal before the magiſtrates. They paſs the accompts of all the officers; but muſt have their own accompts examined and paſſed at the end of the year by the repreſentatives.

The magiſtrates name rectors or miniſters to all the pariſhes.

The Preſbyterian government is eſtabliſhed; and the higheſt eccleſiaſtical court is an aſſembly or ſynod of all the preſbyters of the county. The magiſtrates may take any cauſe from this court, and determine it themſelves.

The magiſtrates may try, and depoſe or ſuſpend any preſbyter.

The militia is eſtabliſhed in imitation of that of SWISSERLAND; which being well known, we ſhall not inſiſt upon it. It will only be proper to make this addition, that an army of 20,000 men be annually drawn out by rotation, paid and encamped during ſix weeks in ſummer; that the duty of a camp may not be altogether unknown.

The magiſtrates appoint all the colonels and downwards; the ſenate all upwards. During war, the general appoints the colonel and downwards, and his commiſſion is good for a twelvemonth. But after that, it muſt be confirmed by the magiſtrates of the county, to which the regiment belongs. The magiſtrates may break any officer in the county regiment; and the ſenate may do the ſame to any officer in the ſervice. If the magiſtrates do not think proper to confirm the general's choice, they may appoint another officer in the place of him they reject.

All crimes are tried within the county by the magiſtrates

magiſtrates and a jury. But the ſenate can ſtop any trial, and bring it before themſelves.

Any county may indict any man before the ſenate for any crime.

The protector, the two ſecretaries, the council of ſtate, with any five or more that the ſenate appoints, are poſſeſſed, on extraordinary emergencies, of *dictatorial* power for ſix months.

The protector may pardon any perſon condemned by the inferior courts.

In time of war, no officer of the army that is in the field can have any civil office in the commonwealth.

The capital, which we ſhall call LONDON, may be allowed four members in the ſenate. It may therefore be divided into four counties. The repreſentatives of each of theſe chooſe one ſenator and ten magiſtrates. There are therefore in the city four ſenators, forty-four magiſtrates, and four hundred repreſentatives. The magiſtrates have the ſame authority as in the counties. The repreſentatives alſo have the ſame authority; but they never meet in one general court: They give their votes in their particular county, or diviſion of hundreds.

When they enact any bye-law, the greater number of counties or diviſions determines the matter. And where theſe are equal, the magiſtrates have the caſting vote.

The magiſtrates chooſe the mayor, ſheriff, recorder, and other officers of the city.

In the commonwealth, no repreſentative, magiſtrate, or ſenator, as ſuch, has any ſalary. The protector, ſecretaries, councils, and ambaſſadors, have ſalaries.

The firſt year in every century is ſet apart for correcting all inequalities, which time may have produced in the repreſentative. This muſt be done by the legiſlature.

The following political aphorisms may explain the reason of these orders.

The lower sort of people and small proprietors are good judges enough of one not very distant from them in rank or habitation; and therefore, in their parochial meetings, will probably choose the best, or nearly the best, representative: But they are wholly unfit for county-meetings, and for electing into the higher offices of the republic. Their ignorance gives the grandees an opportunity of deceiving them.

Ten thousand, even though they were not annually elected, are a basis large enough for any free government. It is true, the nobles in POLAND are more than 10,000, and yet these oppress the people. But as power always continues there in the same persons and families, this makes them, in a manner, a different nation from the people. Besides the nobles are there united under a few heads of families.

All free governments must consist of two councils, a lesser and greater; or, in other words, of a senate and people. The people, as HARRINGTON observes, would want wisdom, without the senate: The senate, without the people, would want honesty.

A large assembly of 1000, for instance, to represent the people, if allowed to debate, would fall into disorder. If not allowed to debate, the senate has a negative upon them, and the worst kind of negative, that before resolution.

Here therefore is an inconvenience, which no government has yet fully remedied, but which is the easiest to be remedied in the world. If the people debate, all is confusion: If they do not debate, they can only resolve; and then the senate carves for them. Divide the people into many separate bodies; and then they may debate with safety, and every inconvenience seems to be prevented.

Cardinal de RETZ says, that all numerous assemblies, however composed, are mere mob, and swayed

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in their debates by the leaſt motive. This we find confirmed by daily experience. When an abſurdity ſtrikes a member, he conveys it to his neighbour, and ſo on, till the whole be infected. Separate this great body; and though every member be only of middling ſenſe, it is not probable, that any thing but reaſon can prevail over the whole. Influence and example being removed, good ſenſe will always get the better of bad among a number of people.

There are two things to be guarded againſt in every *ſenate:* Its combination, and its diviſion. Its combination is moſt dangerous. And againſt this inconvenience we have provided the following remedies. 1. The great dependence of the ſenators on the people by annual elections; and that not by an undiſtinguiſhing rabble, like the ENGLISH electors, but by men of fortune and education. 2. The ſmall power they are allowed. They have few offices to diſpoſe of. Almoſt all are given by the magiſtrates in the counties. 3. The court of competitors, which being compoſed of men that are their rivals, next to them in intereſt, and uneaſy in their preſent ſituation, will be ſure to take all advantages againſt them.

The diviſion of the ſenate is prevented, 1. By the ſmallneſs of their number. 2. As faction ſuppoſes a combination in a ſeparate intereſt, it is prevented by their dependence on the people. 3. They have a power of expelling any factious member. It is true, when another member of the ſame ſpirit comes from the county, they have no power of expelling him: Nor is it fit they ſhould; for that ſhows the humour to be in the people, and may poſſibly ariſe from ſome ill conduct in public affairs. 4. Almoſt any man in a ſenate ſo regularly choſen by the people, may be ſuppoſed fit for any civil office. It would be proper, therefore, for the ſenate to form ſome *general* reſolutions with regard to the diſpoſing of offices among the members: Which reſolutions would not confine them in critical times, when extraordinary parts on the

the one hand, or extraordinary ſtupidity on the other, appears in any ſenator; but they will be ſufficient to prevent intrigue and faction by making the diſpoſal of the offices a thing of courſe. For inſtance, let it be a reſolution, That no man ſhall enjoy any office, till he has ſat four years in the ſenate: That except ambaſſadors, no man ſhall be in office two years following: That no man ſhall attain the higher offices but through the lower: That no man ſhall be protector twice, *&c.* The ſenate of VENICE govern themſelves by ſuch reſolutions.

In foreign politics the intereſt of the ſenate can ſcarcely ever be divided from that of the people; and therefore it is fit to make the ſenate abſolute with regard to them; otherwiſe there could be no ſecrecy or refined policy. Beſides, without money no alliance can be executed; and the ſenate is ſtill ſufficiently dependent. Not to mention, that the legiſlative power being always ſuperior to the executive, the magiſtrates or repreſentatives may interpoſe whenever they think proper.

The chief ſupport of the BRITISH government is the oppoſition of intereſts: but that, though in the main ſerviceable, breeds endleſs factions. In the foregoing plan, it does all the good without any of the harm. The *competitors* have no power of controlling the ſenate: They have only the power of accuſing and appealing to the people.

It is neceſſary, likewiſe, to prevent both combination and diviſion in the thouſand magiſtrates. This is done ſufficiently by the ſeparation of places and intereſts.

But leſt that ſhould not be ſufficient, their dependence on the 10,000 for their elections, ſerves to the ſame purpoſe.

Nor is that all: For the 10,000 may reſume the power whenever they pleaſe; and not only when they all pleaſe, but when any five of a hundred pleaſe; which

which will happen upon the very firſt ſuſpicion of a ſeparate intereſt.

The 10,000 are too large a body either to unite or divide, except when they meet in one place, and fall under the guidance of ambitious leaders. Not to mention their annual election, by the whole body of the people, that are of any conſideration.

A ſmall commonwealth is the happieſt government in the world within itſelf, becauſe every thing lies under the eye of the rulers: But it may be ſubdued by great force from without. This ſcheme ſeems to have all the advantages both of a great and a little commonwealth.

Every county-law may be annulled either by the ſenate or another county; becauſe that ſhows an oppoſition of intereſt: In which caſe no part ought to decide for itſelf. The matter muſt be referred to the whole, which will beſt determine what agrees with general intereſt.

As to the clergy and militia, the reaſons of theſe orders are obvious. Without the dependence of the clergy on the civil magiſtrates, and without a militia, it is in vain to think that any free government will ever have ſecurity or ſtability.

In many governments, the inferior magiſtrates have no rewards but what ariſe from their ambition, vanity, or public ſpirit. The ſalaries of the FRENCH judges amount not to the intereſt of the ſums they pay for their offices. The DUTCH burgo-maſters have little more immediate profit than the ENGLISH juſtices of peace, or the members of the houſe of commons formerly. But leſt any ſhould ſuſpect, that this would beget negligence in the adminiſtration (which is little to be feared, conſidering the natural ambition of mankind), let the magiſtrates have competent ſalaries. The ſenators have acceſs to ſo many honourable and lucrative offices, that their attendance needs not be bought. There is little attendance required of the repreſentatives.

That the foregoing plan of government is practicable, no one can doubt who conſiders the reſemblance that it bears to the commonwealth of the United Provinces; a wiſe and renowned government.

The alterations in the preſent ſcheme ſeem all evidently for the better. 1. The repreſentation is more equal. 2. The unlimited power of the burgo-maſters in the towns, which forms a perfect ariſtocracy in the DUTCH commonwealth, is corrected by a well-tempered democracy, in giving to the people the annual election of the county repreſentatives. 3. The negative, which every province and town has upon the whole body of the DUTCH republic, with regard to alliances, peace and war, and the impoſition of taxes, is here removed. 4. The counties, in the preſent plan, are not ſo independent of each other, nor do they form ſeparate bodies ſo much as the ſeven provinces; where the jealouſy and envy of the ſmaller provinces and towns againſt the greater, particularly HOLLAND and AMSTERDAM, have frequently diſturbed the government. 5. Larger powers, though of the ſafeſt kind, are intruſted to the ſenate than the States-General poſſeſs; by which means, the former may become more expeditious and ſecret in their reſolutions, than it is poſſible for the latter.

The chief alterations that could be made on the BRITISH government, in order to bring it to the moſt perfect model of limited monarchy, ſeem to be the following. *Firſt*, the plan of CROMWELL's parliament ought to be reſtored, by making the repreſentation equal, and by allowing none to vote in the county elections who poſſeſs not a property of 200 pounds value. *Secondly*, As ſuch a houſe of Commons would be too weighty for a frail houſe of Lords, like the preſent, the Biſhops and SCOTCH Peers ought to be removed: The number of the upper houſe ought to be raiſed to three or four hundred: Their ſeats not hereditary, but during life: They ought to have the

election of their own members; and no commoner should be allowed to refuse a seat that was offered him. By this means the house of Lords would consist entirely of the men of chief credit, abilities, and interest in the nation; and every turbulent leader in the house of Commons might be taken off, and connected by interest with the house of Peers. Such an aristocracy would be an excellent barrier both to the monarchy and against it. At present, the balance of our government depends in some measure on the abilities and behaviour of the sovereign, which are variable and uncertain circumstances.

This plan of limited monarchy, however corrected, seems still liable to three great inconveniences. *First*, It removes not entirely, though it may soften, the parties of *court* and *country*. *Secondly*, The king's personal character must still have great influence on the government. *Thirdly*, The sword is in the hands of a single person, who will always neglect to discipline the militia, in order to have a pretence for keeping up a standing army.

We shall conclude this subject, with observing the falsehood of the common opinion, that no large state, such as FRANCE or GREAT BRITAIN, could ever be modelled into a commonwealth, but that such a form of government can only take place in a city or small territory. The contrary seems probable. Though it is more difficult to form a republican government in an extensive country than in a city; there is more facility, when once it is formed, of preserving it steady and uniform, without tumult and faction. It is not easy for the distant parts of a large state to combine in any plan of free government; but they easily conspire in the esteem and reverence for a single person, who, by means of this popular favour, may seize the power, and forcing the more obstinate to submit, may establish a monarchical government. On the other hand, a city readily concurs in the same notions of government,

government, the natural equality of property favours liberty, and the nearneſs of habitation enables the citizens mutually to aſſiſt each other. Even under abſolute princes, the ſubordinate government of cities is commonly republican; while that of counties and provinces is monarchical: But theſe ſame circumſtances which facilitate the erection of commonwealths in cities, render their conſtitution more frail and uncertain. Democracies are turbulent. For however the people may be ſeparated or divided into ſmall parties, either in their votes or elections; their near habitation in a city will always make the force of popular tides and currents very ſenſible. Ariſtocracies are better adapted for peace and order, and accordingly were moſt admired by ancient writers; but they are jealous and oppreſſive. In a large government, which is modelled with maſterly ſkill, there is compaſs and room enough to refine the democracy, from the lower people who may be admitted into the firſt elections or firſt concoction of the commonwealth, to the higher magiſtrates, who direct all the movements. At the ſame time, the parts are ſo diſtant and remote, that it is very difficult, either by intrigue, prejudice, or paſſion, to hurry them into any meaſures againſt the public intereſt.

It is needleſs to enquire, whether ſuch a government would be immortal. I allow the juſtneſs of the poet's exclamation on the endleſs projects of human race, *Man and for ever!* The world itſelf probably is not immortal. Such conſuming plagues may ariſe as would leave even a perfect government a weak prey to its neighbours. We know not to what length enthuſiaſm, or other extraordinary movements of the human mind, may tranſport men, to the neglect of all order and public good. Where difference of intereſt is removed, whimſical and unaccountable factions often ariſe from perſonal favour or enmity. Perhaps, ruſt may grow to the ſprings of the moſt accurate

rate political machine, and disorder its motions. Lastly, extensive conquests, when pursued, must be the ruin of every free government; and of the more perfect governments sooner than of the imperfect; because of the very advantages which the former possess above the latter. And though such a state ought to establish a fundamental law against conquests; yet republics have ambition as well as individuals, and present interest makes men forgetful of their posterity. It is a sufficient incitement to human endeavours, that such a government would flourish for many ages, without pretending to bestow, on any work of man, that immortality which the Almighty seems to have refused to his own productions.

NOTES

NOTES

TO THE

FIRST VOLUME.

NOTE [A], p. 31.

I HAVE taken it for granted, according to the ſuppoſition of MACHIAVEL, that the ancient PERSIANS had no nobility; though there is reaſon to ſuſpect, that the FLORENTINE ſecretary, who ſeems to have been better acquainted with the ROMAN than the GREEK authors, was miſtaken in this particular. The more ancient PERSIANS, whoſe manners are deſcribed by XENOPHON, were a free people, and had nobility. Their ὁμοτιμοι were preſerved even after the extending of their conqueſts and the conſequent change of their government. ARRIAN mentions them in DARIUS's time, *De exped.* ALEX. lib. ii. Hiſtorians alſo ſpeak often of the perſons in command as men of family. TYGRANES, who was general of the MEDES under XERXES, was of the race of ACHMÆNES, HEROD. lib. vii. cap. 62. ARTACHÆAS, who directed the cutting of the canal about mount ATHOS, was of the ſame family. Id. cap. 117. MEGABYSUS was one of the ſeven eminent PERSIANS who conſpired againſt the MAGI. His ſon, ZOPYRUS, was in the higheſt command under DARIUS, and delivered BABYLON to him. His grandſon, MEGABYSUS, commanded the army defeated at MARATHON. His great-grandſon, ZOPYRUS, was alſo eminent, and was baniſhed PERSIA. HEROD. lib. iii. THUC. lib. i. ROSACES, who commanded an army in EGYPT under ARTAXERXES, was alſo deſcended from one of the ſeven conſpirators, DIOD. SIC. lib. xvi. AGESILAUS, in XENOPHON, Hiſt. GRÆC. lib. iv. being deſirous of making a marriage betwixt king COTYS his ally and the daughter of SPITHRIDATES, a PERSIAN of rank, who had deſerted to him, firſt aſks COTYS what family SPITHRIDATES is of. One of the moſt conſiderable in PERSIA, ſays COTYS. ARIÆUS, when offered the ſovereignty by CLEARCHUS and the ten thouſand GREEKS, refuſed it as of too low a rank, and ſaid, that ſo many eminent PERSIANS would never endure his rule. *Id. de exped.* lib. ii. Some of the families deſcended from the ſeven PERSIANS above mentioned remaining during all ALEXANDER's ſucceſſors; and MITHRIDATES, in ANTIOCHUS's time, is ſaid by POLYBIUS to be deſcended from one of them, lib. v. cap. 43. ARTA-

BASUS was esteemed, as ARRIAN says, ἐν τοῖς πρώτοις Περσῶν. lib. iii. And when ALEXANDER married in one day 80 of his captains to PERSIAN women, his intention plainly was to ally the MACEDONIANS with the most eminent PERSIAN families. Id. lib. vii. DIODORUS SICULUS says they were of the most noble birth in PERSIA, lib. xvii. The government of PERSIA was despotic, and conducted in many respects, after the eastern manner, but was not carried so far as to extirpate all nobility, and confound all ranks and orders. It left men who were still great, by themselves and their family, independent of their office and commission. And the reason why the MACEDONIANS kept so easily dominion over them was owing to other causes easy to be found in the historians; though it must be owned that MACHIAVEL's reasoning is, in itself, just, however doubtful its application to the present case.

NOTE [B], p. 48.

BY that *influence of the crown* which I would justify, I mean only that which arises from the offices and honours that are at the disposal of the crown. As to private *bribery*, it may be considered in the same light as the practice of employing spies, which is scarcely justifiable in a good minister, and is infamous in a bad one: But to be a spy, or to be corrupted, is always infamous under all ministers, and is to be regarded as a shameless prostitution. POLYBIUS justly esteems the pecuniary influence of the senate and censors to be one of the regular and constitutional weights, which preserved the balance of the ROMAN government. Lib. vi. cap. 15.

NOTE [C], p. 60.

I SAY, *in part*; for it is a vulgar error to imagine, that the ancients were as great friends to toleration as the ENGLISH or DUTCH are at present. The laws against external superstition, amongst the ROMANS, were as ancient as the time of the twelve tables; and the JEWS as well as CHRISTIANS were sometimes punished by them; though, in general, these laws were not rigorously executed. Immediately after the conquest of GAUL, they forbad all but the natives to be initiated into the religion of the DRUIDS; and this was a kind of persecution. In about a century after this conquest, the emperor CLAUDIUS, quite abolished that superstition by penal laws; which would have been a very grievous persecution, if the imitation of the ROMAN manners had not, before-hand, weaned the GAULS from their ancient prejudices. SUETONIUS *in vita* CLAUDII. PLINY ascribes the abolition of the Druidical superstitions to TIBERIUS, probably because that emperor had taken some steps towards restraining them (lib. xxx cap. i.) This is an instance of the usual caution and moderation of the ROMANS in such cases; and very different from their violent and sanguinary method of treating the *Christians*. Hence we may entertain a suspicion, that those furious persecutions of *Christianity* were in some measure owing to the imprudent zeal and bigotry of the first propagators of that sect; and

Ecclesiastical

Ecclesiastical history affords us many reasons to confirm this suspicion.

NOTE [D], p. 97.

THE orators formed the taste of the ATHENIAN people, not the people of the orators. GORGIAS LEONTINUS was very taking with them, till they became acquainted with a better manner. His figures of speech, says DIODORUS SICULUS, his antithesis, his ἀσυνδετα, his ὁμοιοτελευτον, which are now despised, had a great effect upon the audience. Lib. xii. page 106. *ex editione* RHOD. It is in vain therefore for modern orators to plead the taste of their hearers as an apology for their lame performances. It would be strange prejudice in favour of antiquity, not to allow a BRITISH parliament to be naturally superior in judgment and delicacy to an ATHENIAN mob.

NOTE [E], p. 111.

IF it be asked, how we can reconcile to the foregoing principles the happiness, riches, and good police of the CHINESE, who have always been governed by a monarch, and can scarcely form an idea of a free government? I would answer, that though the CHINESE government be a pure monarchy, it is not, properly speaking, absolute. This proceeds from a peculiarity in the situation of that country: They have no neighbours, except the TARTARS, from whom they were, in some measure, secured, at least seemed to be secured, by their famous wall, and by the great superiority of their numbers. By this means, military discipline has always been much neglected amongst them; and their standing forces are mere militia, of the worst kind; and unfit to suppress any general insurrection in countries so extremely populous. The sword, therefore, may properly be said to be always in the hands of the people, which is a sufficient restraint upon the monarch, and obliges him to lay his *mandarins* or governors of provinces under the restraint of general laws, in order to prevent those rebellions, which we learn from history to have been so frequent and dangerous in that government. Perhaps, a pure monarchy of this kind, were it fitted for defence against foreign enemies, would be the best of all governments, as having both the tranquillity attending kingly power, and the moderation and liberty of popular assemblies.

NOTE [F], p. 149.

WERE I not afraid of appearing too philosophical, I should remind my reader of that famous doctrine, supposed to be fully proved in modern times, "That tastes and colours, and all other "sensible qualities, lie not in the bodies, but merely in the senses." The case is the same with beauty and deformity, virtue and vice. This doctrine, however, takes off no more from the reality of the latter qualities than from that of the former; nor need it give any umbrage either to critics or moralists. Though colours were allowed to lie only in the eye, would dyers or painters ever be less regarded or esteemed? there is a sufficient uniformity in the senses

and feelings of mankind, to make all these qualities the objects of art and reasoning, and to have the greatest influence on life and manners. And as it is certain, that the discovery above-mentioned in natural philosophy, makes no alteration on action and conduct; why should a like discovery in moral philosophy make any alteration?

NOTE [G], p. 161.

THE Sceptic, perhaps, carries the matter too far, when he limits all philosophical topics and reflections to these two. There seem to be others, whose truth is undeniable, and whose natural tendency is to tranquillize and soften all the passions. Philosophy greedily seizes these, studies them, weighs them, commits them to the memory, and familiarizes them to the mind: And their influence on tempers, which are thoughtful, gentle, and moderate, may be considerable. But what is their influence, you will say, if the temper be antecedently disposed after the same manner as that to which they pretend to form it? They may, at least, fortify that temper, and furnish it with views, by which it may entertain and nourish itself. Here are a few examples of such philosophical reflections.

1. Is it not certain, that every condition has concealed ills? Then why envy any body?

2. Every one has known ills; and there is a compensation throughout. Why not be contented with the present?

3. Custom deadens the sense both of the good and the ill, and levels every thing.

4. Health and humour all. The rest of little consequence, except these be affected.

5. How many other good things have I? Then why be vexed for one ill?

6. How many are happy in the condition of which I complain? How many envy me?

7. Every good must be paid for: Fortune by labour, favour by flattery. Would I keep the price, yet have the commodity?

8. Expect not too great happiness in life. Human nature admits it not.

9. Propose not a happiness too complicated. But does that depend on me? Yes: The first choice does. Life is like a game: One may choose the game: And passion, by degrees, seizes the proper object.

10. Anticipate by your hopes and fancy future consolation, which time infallibly brings to every affliction.

11. I desire to be rich. Why? That I may possess many fine objects; houses, gardens, equipage, &c. How many fine objects does nature offer to every one without expence? If enjoyed, sufficient; if not, see the effect of custom or of temper, which would soon take off the relish of the riches.

12.

12. I desire fame. Let this occur: If I act well, I shall have the esteem of all my acquaintance. And what is all the rest to me?

These reflections are so obvious, that it is a wonder they occur not to every man: So convincing, that it is a wonder, they persuade not every man. But perhaps they do occur to and persuade most men, when they consider human life by a general and calm survey: But where any real, affecting incident happens; when passion is awakened, fancy agitated, example draws, and council urges; the philosopher is lost in the man, and he seeks in vain for that persuasion which before seemed so firm and unshaken. What remedy for this inconvenience? Assist yourself by a frequent perusal of the entertaining moralists: Have recourse to the learning of PLUTARCH, the imagination of LUCIAN, the eloquence of CICERO, the wit of SENECA, the gaiety of MONTAIGNE, the sublimity of SHAFTESBURY. Moral precepts, so couched, strike deep, and fortify the mind against the illusions of passion. But trust not altogether to external aid: By habit and study acquire that philosophical temper which both gives force to reflection, and by rendering a great part of your happiness independant, takes off the edge from all disorderly passions, and tranquillizes the mind. Despise not these helps; but confide not too much in them neither, unless nature has been favourable in the temper with which she has endowed you.

NOTE [H], p. 179.

IT is a saying of MENANDER, Κομψος στρατιωτης, ουδ αν ει πλαττει θεος Ουθεις γενοιτ αν. MEN. apud STOBÆUM. *It is not in the power even of God to make a polite soldier.* The contrary observation with regard to the manners of soldiers takes place in our days. This seems to me a presumption, that the ancients owed all their refinement and civility to books and study; for which, indeed, a soldier's life is not so well calculated. Company and the world is their sphere: And if there be any politeness to be learned from company, they will certainly have a considerable share of it.

NOTE [I], p. 179.

THOUGH all mankind have a strong propensity to religion at certain times and in certain dispositions; yet are there few or none who have it to that degree, and with that constancy, which is requisite to support the character of this profession. It must therefore happen, that clergymen, being drawn from the common mass of mankind, as people are to other employments, by the views of profit, the greater part, though no atheists or free-thinkers, will find it necessary, on particular occasions, to feign more devotion than they are, at that time, possessed of, and to maintain the appearance of fervour and seriousness, even when jaded with the exercises of their religion, or when they have their minds engaged in the common occupations of life. They must not, like the rest of the world, give scope to their natural movements and sentiments: They must set a guard over their looks, and words, and actions: And, in order to support the vene-

ration paid them by the multitude, they muſt not only keep a remarkable reſerve, but muſt promote the ſpirit of ſuperſtition by a continued grimace and hypocriſy. This diſſimulation often deſtroys the candour and ingenuity of their temper, and makes an irreparable breach in their character.

If by chance any of them be poſſeſſed of a temper more ſuſceptible of devotion than uſual, ſo that he has but little occaſion for hypocriſy to ſupport the character of his profeſſion; it is ſo natural for him to over-rate this advantage, and to think that it attones for every violation of morality, that frequently he is not more virtuous than the hypocrite. And though few dare openly avow thoſe exploded opinions, *that every thing is lawful to the ſaints*, and *that they alone have property in their goods*; yet may we obſerve, that theſe principles lurk in every boſom, and repreſent a zeal for religious obſervances as ſo great a merit, that it may compenſate for many vices and enormities. This obſervation is ſo common, that all prudent men are on their guard, when they meet with any extraordinary appearance of religion; though at the ſame time they confeſs, that there are many exceptions to this general rule, and that probity and ſuperſtition, or even probity and fanaticiſm, are not altogether, and in every inſtance, incompatible.

Moſt men are ambitious; but the ambition of other men may commonly be ſatisfied, by excelling in their particular profeſſion, and thereby promoting the intereſts of ſociety. The ambition of the clergy can often be ſatisfied only by promoting ignorance, and ſuperſtition, and implicit faith, and pious frauds: And having got what ARCHIMIDES only wanted (namely, another world, on which he could fix his engines), no wonder they move this world at their pleaſure.

Moſt men have an overweaning conceit of themſelves; but *theſe* have a peculiar temptation to that vice who are regarded with ſuch veneration, and are even deemed ſacred by the ignorant multitude.

Moſt men are apt to bear a particular regard for members of their own profeſſion; but as a lawyer, or phyſician, or merchant, does, each of them, follow out his buſineſs apart, the intereſts of men of theſe profeſſions are not ſo cloſely united as the intereſts of clergymen of the ſame religion; where the whole body gains by the veneration paid to their common tenets, and by the ſuppreſſion of antagoniſts.

Few men can bear contradiction with patience; but the clergy too often proceed even to a degree of fury on this head: Becauſe all their credit and livelihood depend upon the belief which their opinions meet with; and they alone pretend to a divine and ſupernatural authority, or have any colour for repreſenting their antagoniſts as impious and prophane. The *Odium Theologicum*, or Theological Hatred, is noted even to a proverb, and means that degree of rancour, which is the moſt furious and implacable.

Revenge

Revenge is a natural paſſion to mankind; but ſeems to reign with the greateſt force in prieſts and women: Becauſe, being deprived of the immediate exertion of anger, in violence and combat, they are apt to fancy themſelves deſpiſed on that account; and their pride ſupports their vindictive diſpoſition.

Thus many of the vices of human nature are, by fixed moral cauſes, inflamed in that profeſſion; and though ſeveral individuals eſcape the contagion, yet all wiſe governments will be on their guard againſt the attempts of a ſociety, who will for ever combine into one faction, and while it acts as a ſociety, will for ever be actuated by ambition, pride, revenge, and a perſecuting ſpirit.

The temper of religion is grave and ſerious; and this is the character required of prieſts, which confines them to ſtrict rules of decency, and commonly prevents irregularity and intemperance amongſt them. The gaiety, much leſs the exceſſes of pleaſure, is not permitted in that body; and this virtue is, perhaps, the only one which they owe to their profeſſion. In religions, indeed, founded on ſpeculative principles, and where public diſcourſes make a part of religious ſervice, it may alſo be ſuppoſed that the clergy will have a conſiderable ſhare in the learning of the times; though it is certain that their taſte in eloquence will always be greater than their proficiency in reaſoning and philoſophy. But whoever poſſeſſes the other noble virtues of humanity, meekneſs, and moderation, as very many of them no doubt do, is beholden for them to nature or reflection, not to the genius of his calling.

It was no bad expedient in the old ROMANS, for preventing the ſtrong effect of the prieſtly character, to make it a law, that no one ſhould be received into the ſacerdotal office, till he was paſt fifty years of age, DION. HAL. lib. i. The living a layman till that age, it is preſumed, would be able to fix the character.

NOTE [K], p. 180.

CÆSAR (*de Bello* GALLICO, lib. i.) ſays, that the GALLIC horſes were very good; the GERMAN very bad. We find in lib. vii. that he was obliged to mount ſome GERMAN cavalry with GALLIC horſes. At preſent, no part of EUROPE has ſo bad horſes of all kinds as FRANCE; but GERMANY abounds with excellent war horſes. This may beget a little ſuſpicion, that even animals depend not on the climate, but on the different breeds, and on the ſkill and care in rearing them. The north of ENGLAND abounds in the beſt horſes of all kinds which are perhaps in the world. In the neighbouring counties, north ſide of the TWEED, no good horſes of any kind are to be met with. STRABO, lib. ii. rejects, in a great meaſure, the influence of climates upon men. All is cuſtom and education, ſays he. It is not from nature, that the ATHENIANS are learned, the LACEDEMONIANS ignorant, and the THEBANS too, who are ſtill nearer neighbours to the former. Even the difference of animals, he adds, depends not on climate.

NOTE [L], p. 182.

A Small sect or society amidst a greater are commonly most regular in their morals; because they are more remarked, and the faults of individuals draw dishonour on the whole. The only exception to this rule is, when the superstition and prejudices of the large society are so strong as to throw an infamy on the smaller society, independent of their morals. For in that case, having no character either to save or gain, they become careless of their behaviour, except among themselves.

NOTE [M], p. 185.

I Am apt to suspect the negroes to be naturally inferior to the whites. There scarcely ever was a civilized nation of that complexion, nor even any individual eminent either in action or speculation. No ingenious manufactures amongst them, no arts, no sciences. On the other hand, the most rude and barbarous of the whites, such as the ancient GERMANS, the present TARTARS, have still something eminent about them, in their valour, form of government, or some other particular. Such a uniform and constant difference could not happen in so many countries and ages, if nature had not made an original distinction between these breeds of men. Not to mention our colonies, there are NEGRO slaves dispersed all over EUROPE, of whom none ever discovered any symptoms of ingenuity; though low people, without education, will start up amongst us, and distinguish themselves in every profession. In JAMAICA, indeed, they talk of one negro as a man of parts and learning; but it is likely he is admired for slender accomplishments, like a parrot who speaks a few words plainly.

NOTE [N], p. 197.

PAinters make no scruple of representing distress and sorrow as well as any other passion: But they seem not to dwell so much on these melancholy affections as the poets, who, though they copy every motion of the human breast, yet pass quickly over the agreeable sentiments. A painter represents only one instant; and if that be passionate enough, it is sure to affect and delight the spectator: But nothing can furnish to the poet a variety of scenes and incidents and sentiments, except distress, terror, or anxiety. Complete joy and satisfaction is attended with security, and leaves no farther room for action.

NOTE [O], p. 232.

THE more ancient ROMANS lived in perpetual war with all their neighbours: And in old LATIN, the term *hostis*, expressed both a stranger and an enemy. This is remarked by CICERO; but by him ascribed to the humanity of his ancestors, who softened as much as possible the denomination of an enemy, by calling him by the same appellation which signified a stranger. *De Off.* lib. ii. It is however much more probable, from the manners of the times, that the ferocity of those people was so great as to make them regard all strangers

ſtrangers as enemies, and call them by the ſame name. It is not, beſides, conſiſtent with the moſt common maxims of policy or of nature, that any ſtate ſhould regard its public enemies with a friendly eye, or preſerve any ſuch ſentiments for them as the ROMAN orator would aſcribe to his anceſtors. Not to mention, that the early ROMANS really exerciſed piracy, as we learn from their firſt treaties with CARTHAGE, preſerved by POLYBIUS, lib. iii. and conſequently like the SALLEE and ALGERINE rovers, were actually at war with moſt nations, and a ſtranger and an enemy were with them almoſt ſynonymous.

NOTE [P], p. 254.

A Private ſoldier in the ROMAN infantry had a denarius a day, ſomewhat leſs than eightpence. The ROMAN emperors had commonly 25 legions in pay, which allowing 5000 men to a legion, makes 125,000. TACIT. *Ann.* lib. iv. It is true, there were alſo auxiliaries to the legions; but their numbers are uncertain, as well as their pay. To conſider only the legionaries, the pay of the private men could not exceed 1,600,000 pounds. Now the parliament in the laſt war commonly allowed for the fleet 2,500,000. We have therefore 900,000 over for the officers and other expences of the ROMAN legions. There ſeem to have been but few officers in the ROMAN armies, in compariſon of what are employed in all of our modern troops, except ſome SWISS corps. And theſe officers had very ſmall pay: A centurion, for inſtance, only double a common ſoldier. And as the ſoldiers from their pay (TACIT. *Ann.* lib. i.) bought their own clothes, arms, tents, and baggage; this muſt alſo diminiſh conſiderably the other charges of the army. So little expenſive was that mighty government, and ſo eaſy was its yoke over the world. And, indeed, this is the more natural concluſion from the foregoing calculations. For money, after the conqueſt of ÆGYPT, ſeems to have been nearly in as great plenty at ROME as it is at preſent in the richeſt of the EUROPEAN kingdoms.

NOTE [Q], p. 259.

THESE facts I give upon the authority of Monſ. du TOT in his *Reflections politiques*, an author of reputation. Though I muſt confeſs, that the facts which he advances on other occaſions, are often ſo ſuſpicious, as to make his authority leſs in this matter. However, the general obſervation, that the augmenting of the money in FRANCE does not at firſt proportionably augment the prices, is certainly juſt.

By the by, this ſeems to be one of the beſt reaſons which can be given, for a gradual and univerſal encreaſe of the denomination of money, though it has been entirely overlooked in all thoſe volumes which have been written on that queſtion by MELON DU TOT, and PARIS de VERNEY. Were all our money, for inſtance, recoined, and a penny's worth of ſilver taken from every ſhilling, the new ſhilling would probably purchaſe every thing that could have been bought

bought by the old; the prices of every thing would thereby be insensibly diminished; a foreign trade enlivened; and domestic industry, by the circulation of a great number of pounds and shillings, would receive some encrease and encouragement. In executing such a project, it would be better to make the new shillings pass for 24 halfpence, in order to preserve the illusion, and make it be taken for the same. And as a recoinage of our silver begins to be requisite, by the continual wearing of our shillings and sixpences, it may be doubtful, whether we ought to imitate the example in King WILLIAM's reign, when the clipt money was raised to the old standard.

NOTE [R], p. 285.

IT must carefully be remarked, that throughout this discourse, wherever I speak of the level of money, I mean always its proportional level to the commodities, labour, industry, and skill, which is in the several states. And I assert, that where these advantages are double, triple, quadruple, to what they are in the neighbouring states, the money infallibly will also be double, triple, quadruple. The only circumstance that can obstruct the exactness of these proportions, is the expence of transporting the commodities from one place to another; and this expence is sometimes unequal. Thus the corn, cattle, cheese, butter, of DERBYSHIRE, cannot draw the money of LONDON, so much as the manufactures of LONDON draw the money of DERBYSHIRE. But this objection is only a seeming one: For so far as the transport of commodities is expensive, so far is the communication between the places obstructed and imperfect.

NOTE [S], p. 328.

I Have heard it has been computed, that all the creditors of the public, natives and foreigners, amount only to 17,000. These make a figure at present on their income; but in case of a public bankruptcy, would, in an instant, become the lowest as well as the most wretched of the people. The dignity and authority of the landed gentry and nobility is much better rooted; and would render the contention very unequal, if ever we come to that extremity. One would incline to assign to this event a very near period, such as half a century, had not our father's prophecies of this kind been already found fallacious, by the duration of our public credit so much beyond all reasonable expectation. When the astrologers in FRANCE were every year foretelling the death of HENRY IV. *These fellows*, says he, *must be right at last*. We shall, therefore, be more cautious than to assign any precise date; and shall content ourselves with pointing out the event in general.

NOTE [T], p. 339.

COLUMELLA says, lib. iii. cap. 8. that in ÆGYPT and AFRICA, the bearing of twins was frequent, and even customary; *gemini partus familiares, ac pene solennes sunt*. If this was true, there is a physical difference both in countries and ages: For travellers make

no

no such remarks on these countries at present. On the contrary, we are apt to suppose the northern nations more prolific. As those two countries were provinces of the ROMAN empire, it is difficult, though not altogether absurd, to suppose that such a man as COLUMELLA might be mistaken with regard to them.

NOTE [U]. p. 345.

EPIST. 122. The inhuman sports exhibited at ROME, may justly be considered too as an effect of the people's contempt for slaves, and was also a great cause of the general inhumanity of their princes and rulers. Who can read the accounts of the amphitheatrical entertainments without horror? Or who is surprised, that the emperors should treat that people in the same way the people treated their inferiors? One's humanity is apt to renew the barbarous wish of CALIGULA, that the people had but one neck: A man could almost be pleased by a single blow, to put an end to such a race of monsters. You may thank God, says the author above cited *(epist. 7.)*, addressing himself to the ROMAN people, that you have a master (to wit the mild and merciful NERO), who is incapable of learning cruelty from your example. This was spoke in the beginning of his reign: But he fitted them very well afterwards; and, no doubt, was considerably improved by the sight of the barbarous objects, to which he had, from his infancy, been accustomed.

NOTE [X], p. 347.

AS *servus* was the name of the genus, and *verna* of the species, without any correlative, this forms a strong presumption, that the latter were by far the least numerous. It is an universal observation which we may form upon language, that where two related parts of a whole bear any proportion to each other, in numbers, rank, or consideration, there are always correlative terms invented, which answer to both the parts, and express their mutual relation. If they bear no proportion to each other, the term is only invented for the less, and marks its distinction from the whole. Thus *man* and *woman*, *master* and *servant*, *father* and *son*, *prince* and *subject*, *stranger* and *citizen*, are correlative terms. But the words *seamen*, *carpenter*, *smith*, *taylor*, &c. have no correspondent terms, which express those who are no seamen, no carpenters, *&c.* Languages differ very much with regard to the particular words where this distinction obtains; and may thence afford very strong inferences concerning the manners and customs of different nations. The military government of the ROMAN emperors had exalted the soldiery so high, that they balanced all the other orders of the state: Hence *miles* and *paganus* became relative terms; a thing, till then, unknown to ancient, and still so to modern languages. Modern superstition exalted the clergy so high, that they overbalanced the whole state: Hence *clergy* and *laity* are terms opposed in all modern languages; and in these alone. And from the same principles I infer, that if the number of slaves bought by the ROMANS from foreign countries, had not ex-

extremely exceeded thoſe which were bred at home, *verna* would have had a correlative which would have expreſſed the former ſpecies of ſlaves. But theſe, it would ſeem, compoſed the main body of the ancient ſlaves, and the latter were but a few exceptions.

NOTE [Y], p. 350.

"NON temere ancillæ ejus rei cauſa comparantur ut pariant." *Digeſt.* lib. v. tit. 3. *de hæred. petit. lex.* 27. The following texts are to the ſame purpoſe, "Spadonem morboſum non eſſe, neque "vitioſum, verius mihi videtur; ſed ſanum eſſe, ſicuti illum qui "unum teſticulum habet, qui etiam generare poteſt." *Digeſt.* lib. ii. tit. 1. *de ædilitio edicto, lex* 6. § 2. "Sin autem quis ita ſpado ſit, "ut tam neceſſaria pars corporis penitus abſit, morboſus eſt." *Id. lex* 7. His impotence, it ſeems, was only regarded ſo far as his health or life might be affected by it. In other reſpects, he was full as valuable. The ſame reaſoning is employed with regard to female ſlaves. "Quæritur de ea muliere quæ ſemper mortuos parit, an "morboſa ſit? et ait Sabinus, ſi vulvæ vitio hoc contingit, morbo-"ſam eſſe." *Id. lex.* 14. It had even been doubted, whether a woman pregnant was morbid or vitiated; and it is determined, that ſhe is ſound, not on account of the value of her offſpring, but becauſe it is the natural part or office of women to bear children. "Si "mulier prægnans venerit, inter omnes convenit ſanam eam eſſe. "Maximum enim ac præcipuum munus fœminarum accipere ac tu-"eri conceptum. Puerperam quoque ſanam eſſe; ſi modo nihil "extrinſecus accedit, quod corpus ejus in aliquam valetudinem im-"mitteret. De ſterili Cœlius diſtinguere Trebatium dicit, ut ſi "natura ſterilis ſit, ſana ſit; ſi vitio corporis, contra." *Id.*

NOTE [Z], p. 356.

THE practice of leaving great ſums of money to friends, tho' one had near relations, was common in GREECE as well as ROME; as we may gather from LUCIAN. This practice prevails much leſs in modern times; and BEN JOHNSON'S VOLPONE is therefore almoſt entirely extracted from ancient authors, and ſuits better the manners of thoſe times.

It may juſtly be thought, that the liberty of divorces in ROME was another diſcouragement to marriage. Such a practice prevents not quarrels from *humour*, but rather encreaſes them; and occaſions alſo thoſe from *intereſt*, which are much more dangerous and deſtructive. See farther on this head, Part I. Eſſay XVIII. Perhaps too the unnatural luſts of the ancients ought to be taken into conſideration as of ſome moment.

NOTE [AA], p. 359.

PLIN. lib. xviii. cap. 3. The ſame author, in cap. 6. ſays, *Verumque fatentibus latifundia perdidere* ITALIAM; *jam vero et provincias. Sex domi ſeniſſem* AFRICÆ *poſſidebant, cum interfecit eos* NERO *princeps.* In this view the barbarous butchery committed by the firſt ROMAN emperors, was not, perhaps, ſo deſtructive to the public

public as we may imagine. Theſe never ceaſed till they had extinguiſhed all the illuſtrious families, which had enjoyed the plunder of the world during the latter ages of the republic. The new nobles who aroſe in their place were leſs ſplendid, as we learn from TACIT. *Ann.* lib. iii. cap. 55.

NOTE [BB], p. 365.

WE ſhall mention from DIODORUS SICULUS alone a few maſſacres, which paſſed in the courſe of ſixty years, during the moſt ſhining age of GREECE. There were baniſhed from SYBARIS 500 of the nobles and their partizans; lib. xii. p. 77. *ex edit.* RHODOMANNI. Of CHIANS, 600 citizens baniſhed; lib. xiii. p. 189. At EPHESUS, 340 killed, 1000 baniſhed; lib. xiii. p. 223. Of CYRENIANS, 500 nobles killed, all the reſt baniſhed; lib. xiv. p. 263. The CORINTHIANS killed 120, baniſhed 500; lib. xiv. p. 304. PHÆBIDAS the SPARTAN baniſhed 300 BÆOTIANS; lib. xv. p. 324. Upon the fall of the LACÆDEMONIANS, democracies were reſtored in many cities, and ſevere vengeance taken of the nobles, after the GREEK manner. But matters did not end there; for the baniſhed nobles returning in many places, butchered their adverſaries at PHIALÆ, in CORINTH, in MEGARA, in PHLIASIA. In this laſt place they killed 300 of the people; but theſe again revolting, killed above 600 of the nobles, and baniſhed the reſt; lib. xv. p. 357. In ARCADIA 1400 baniſhed, beſides many killed. The baniſhed retired to SPARTA and to PALLANTIUM: The latter were delivered up to their countrymen, and all killed; lib. xv. p. 373. Of the baniſhed from ARGOS and THEBES, there were 509 in the SPARTAN army; *id.* p. 374. Here is a detail of the moſt remarkable of AGATHOCLES's cruelties from the ſame author. The people before his uſurpation had baniſhed 600 nobles; lib. xix. p. 655. Afterwards that tyrant, in concurrence with the people, killed 4000 nobles, and baniſhed 6000; *id.* p. 647. He killed 4000 people at GELA; *id.* p. 741. By AGATHOCLES's brother 8000 baniſhed from SYRACUSE; lib. xx. p. 757. The inhabitants of ÆGESTA, to the number of 40,000 were killed, man, woman, and child; and with tortures, for the ſake of their money; *id.* p. 802. All the relations, to wit, father, brother, children, grandfather, of his LIBYAN army, killed; *id.* p. 803. He killed 7000 exiles after capitulation; *id.* p. 816. It is to be remarked, that AGATHOCLES was a man of great ſenſe and courage, and is not to be ſuſpected of wanton cruelty, contrary to the maxims of his age.

NOTE [CC], p. 366.

IN order to recommend his client to the favour of the people, he enumerates all the ſums he had expended. When χορηγος, 30 minas: Upon a chorus of men 20 minas; ειστυρρειχισαις, 8 minas; ανδρασι χορηγων, 50 minas; κυκλικω χορω, 3 minas; Seven times trierarch, where he ſpent 6 talents: Taxes, once 30 minas, another time 40; γυμνασιαρχων, 12 minas; χορηγω παιδικω χορω, 15 minas; κωμωδοις χορηγων, 18 minas; πυρριχισταις, αγενειοις, 7 minas; τριηρει αμιλλωμενω,

λομενος, 15 minas; αρχεθεωρος, 30 minas: In the whole, ten talents 38 minos. An immenſe ſum for an ATHENIAN fortune, and what alone would be eſteemed great riches, *Orat.* 20. It is true, he ſays, the law did not oblige him abſolutely to be at ſo much expence, not above a fourth. But without the favour of the people, no body was ſo much as ſafe; and this was the only way to gain it. See farther, *orat.* 24. *de pop. ſtatu.* In another place, he introduces a ſpeaker, who ſays that he had ſpent his whole fortune, and an immenſe one, eighty talents, for the people. *Orat.* 25. *de prob.* EVANDRI. The μετοικοι, or ſtrangers, find, ſays he, if they do not contribute largely enough to the people's fancy, that they have reaſon to repent it. *Orat.* 30. *contra* PHIL. You may ſee with what care DEMOSTHENES diſplays his expences of this nature, when he pleads for himſelf *de corona;* and how he exaggerates MIDAS's ſtingineſs in this particular, in his accuſation of that criminal. All this, by the by, is a mark of a very iniquitous judicature; and yet the ATHENIANS valued themſelves on having the moſt legal and regular adminiſtration of any people in GREECE.

NOTE [DD], p. 367.

THE authorities above cited are all hiſtorians, orators, and philoſophers, whoſe teſtimony is unqueſtioned. It is dangerous to rely upon writers who deal in ridicule and ſatire. What will poſterity, for inſtance, infer from this paſſage of Dr SWIFT? "I told "him, that in the kingdom of TRIBNIA (BRITAIN) by the natives "called LANGDON (LONDON) where I had ſojourned ſome time in "my travels, the bulk of the people conſiſt, in a manner, wholly of "diſcoverers, witneſſes, informers, accuſers, proſecutors, evidences, "ſwearers, together with their ſeveral ſubſervient and ſubaltern "inſtruments, all under the colours, the conduct, and pay of mini-"ſters of ſtate and their deputies. The plots in that kingdom are "uſually the workmanſhip of thoſe perſons," &c. GULLIVER's *Travels.* Such a repreſentation might ſuit the government of ATHENS; not that of ENGLAND, which is remarkable, even in modern times, for humanity, juſtice, and liberty. Yet the Doctor's ſatire, though carried to extremes, as is uſual with him, even beyond other ſatirical writers, did not altogether want an object. The Biſhop of ROCHESTER, who was his friend, and of the ſame party, had been baniſhed a little before by bill of attainder, with great juſtice, but without ſuch proof as was legal, or according to the ſtrict forms of common law.

NOTE [EE], p. 375.

IN general, there is more candour and ſincerity in ancient hiſtorians, but leſs exactneſs and care, than in the moderns. Our ſpeculative factions, eſpecially thoſe of religion, throw ſuch an illuſion over our minds, that men ſeem to regard impartiality to their adverſaries and to heretics, as a vice or weakneſs: But the commonneſs of books, by means of printing, has obliged modern hiſtorians to be

more careful in avoiding contradictions and incongruities. DIODORUS SICULUS is a good writer; but it is with pain I see his narration contradict, in so many particulars, the two most authentic pieces of all GREEK history, to wit, XENOPHON's expedition, and DEMOSTHENES's orations. PLUTARCH and APPIAN seem scarce ever to have read CICERO's epistles.

NOTE [FF], p. 377.

PLINY, lib. vii. cap. 25. says, that CÆSAR used to boast, that there had fallen in battle against him one million one hundred and ninety-two thousand men, besides those who perished in the civil wars. It is not probable, that the conqueror could ever pretend to be so exact in his computation. But allowing the fact, it is likely, that the HELVETII, GERMANS, and BRITONS, whom he slaughtered, would amount to near a half of the number.

NOTE [GG], p. 380.

WE are to observe, that when DIONYSIUS HALYCARNASSÆUS says, that if we regard the ancient walls of ROME, the extent of that city will not appear greater than that of ATHENS; he must mean the ACROPOLIS and high town only. No ancient author ever speaks of the PYRÆUM, PHALERUS, and MUNYCHIA, as the same with ATHENS. Much less can it be supposed, that DIONYSIUS would consider the matter in that light, after the walls of CIMON and PERICLES were destroyed, and ATHENS was entirely separated from these other towns. This observation destroys all VOSSIUS's reasonings, and introduces common sense into these calculations.

NOTE [HH], p. 383.

DEMOST. *contra* LEPT. The ATHENIANS brought yearly from PONTUS 400,000 medimni or bushels of corn, as appeared from the custom-house books; and this was the greater part of their importation of corn. This, by the by, is a strong proof that there is some great mistake in the foregoing passage of ATHENÆUS. For ATTICA itself was so barren of corn, that it produced not enough even to maintain the peasants. TIT. LIV. lib. xliii. cap. 6. And 400,000 medimni would scarcely feed 100,000 men during a twelvemonth. LUCIAN, in his *navigium sive vota*, says, that a ship, which, by the dimensions he gives, seems to have been about the size of our third rates, carried as much corn as would maintain all ATTICA for a twelvemonth: But perhaps ATHENS was decayed at that time; and besides, it is not safe to trust to such loose rhetorical calculations.

NOTE [II], p. 383.

DIOD. SIC. lib. xvii. When ALEXANDER attacked THEBES, we may safely conclude, that almost all the inhabitants were present. Whoever is acquainted with the spirit of the GREEKS, especially of the THEBANS, will never suspect that any of them would desert their country, when it was reduced to such extreme peril and distress. As ALEXANDER took the town by storm, all those who

who bore arms were put to the ſword without mercy; and they amounted only to 6000 men. Among theſe were ſome ſtrangers and manumitted ſlaves. The captives, conſiſting of old men, women, children, and ſlaves, were ſold, and they amounted to 30,000. We may therefore conclude, that the free citizens in THEBES, of both ſexes and all ages, were near 24,000; the ſtrangers and ſlaves about 12,000. Theſe laſt, we may obſerve, were ſomewhat fewer in proportion than at ATHENS, as is reaſonable to imagine from this circumſtance; that ATHENS was a town of more trade to ſupport ſlaves, and of more entertainment to allure ſtrangers. It is alſo to be remarked, that thirty-ſix thouſand was the whole number of people, both in the city of THEBES, and the neighbouring territory: A very moderate number, it muſt be confeſſed; and this computation, being founded on facts which appear indiſputable, muſt have great weight in the preſent controverſy. The above-mentioned number of RHODIANS too, were all the inhabitants of the iſland who were free, and able to bear arms.

NOTE [KK], p. 386.

STRABO, lib. v. ſays, that the Emperor AUGUSTUS prohibited the raiſing houſes higher than ſeventy feet. In another paſſage, lib. xvi. he ſpeaks of the houſes of ROME as remarkably high. See alſo to the ſame purpoſe VITRUVIUS, lib. ii. cap. 8. ARISTIDES the ſophiſt, in his oration εἰς Ῥώμην, ſays, that ROME conſiſted of cities on the top of cities; and that if one were to ſpread it out and unfold it, it would cover the whole ſurface of ITALY. Where an author indulges himſelf in ſuch extravagant declamations, and gives ſo much into the hyperbolical ſtyle, one knows not how far he muſt be reduced. But this reaſoning ſeems natural: If ROME was built in ſo ſcattered a manner as DIONYSIUS ſays, and ran ſo much into the country, there muſt have been very few ſtreets where the houſes were raiſed ſo high. It is only for want of room that any body builds in that inconvenient manner.

NOTE [LL], p. 386.

LIB. ii. epiſt. 16. lib. v. epiſt. 6. It is true, PLINY there deſcribes a country-houſe: But ſince that was the idea which the ancients formed of a magnificent and convenient building, the great men would certainly build the ſame way in town. "In laxitatem "ruris excurrunt," ſays SENECA of the rich and voluptuous, epiſt. 114. VALERIUS MAXIMUS, lib. iv. cap. 4. ſpeaking of CINCINNATUS's field of four acres, ſays, "Anguſte ſe habitare nunc putat, "cujus domus tantum patet quantum CINCINNATI rura patuerant." To the ſame purpoſe ſee lib. xxxvi. cap. 15. alſo lib. xviii. cap. 2.

NOTE [MM], p. 387.

"MOENIA ejus (Romæ) collegere ambitu imperatoribus, cenſoribuſque VESPASIANIS, A. U. C. 828. paſſ. xiii. MCC. "complexa montes ſeptem, ipſa dividitur in regiones quatuordecim, "compita earum 265. Ejuſdem ſpatii menſura, currente a milliario in "capite

" capite ROM. Fori ſtatuto, ad ſingulas portas, quæ ſunt hodie " numero 37, ita ut duodecim portæ ſemel numerentur, præterean- " turque ex veteribus ſeptem, quæ eſſe deſierunt, efficit paſſuum per " directum 30,775, ad extrema vero tectorum cum caſtris prætoriis " ab eodem Milliario, per vicos omnium viarum, menſura collegit " paulo amplius ſeptuaginta millia paſſuum. Quo ſi quis altitu- " dinem tectorum addat, dignam profecto, æſtimationem concipiat, " fateaturque nullius urbis magnitudinem in toto orbe potuiſſe ei " comparari." PLIN. lib. iii. cap. 5.

All the beſt manuſcripts of PLINY read the paſſage as here cited, and fix the compaſs of the walls of ROME to be thirteen miles. The queſtion is, What PLINY means by 30,775 paces, and how that number was formed? The manner in which I conceive it, is this. ROME was a ſemicircular area of thirteen miles circumference. The Forum, and conſequently the Milliarium, we know, was ſituated on the banks of the TYBER, and near the center of the circle, or upon the diameter of the ſemicircular area. Though there were thirty-ſeven gates to ROME, yet only twelve of them had ſtraight ſtreets, leading from them to the Milliarium. PLINY, therefore, having aſſigned the circumference of ROME, and knowing that that alone was not ſufficient to give us a juſt notion of its ſurface, uſes this farther method. He ſuppoſes all the ſtreets, leading from the Milliarium to the twelve gates, to be laid together into one ſtraight line, and ſuppoſes we run along that line ſo as to count each gate once: In which caſe, he ſays, that the whole line is 30,775 paces; or in other words, that each ſtreet or radius of the ſemicircular area is upon an average two miles and a half; and the whole length of ROME is five miles, and its breadth about half as much, beſides the ſcattered ſuburbs.

PERE HARDOUIN underſtands this paſſage in the ſame manner, with regard to the laying together the ſeveral ſtreets of ROME into one line, in order to compoſe 30,775 paces: But then he ſuppoſes, that ſtreets led from the Milliarium to every gate, and that no ſtreet exceeded 800 paces in length. But (1.) a ſemicircular area, whoſe radius was only 800 paces, could never have a circumference near thirteen miles, the compaſs of ROME as aſſigned by PLINY. A radius of two miles and a half forms very nearly that circumference. (2.) There is an abſurdity in ſuppoſing a city ſo built as to have ſtreets running to its center from every gate in its circumference. Theſe ſtreets muſt interfere as they approach. (3.) This diminiſhes too much from the greatneſs of ancient ROME, and reduces that city below even BRISTOL or ROTTERDAM.

The ſenſe which VOSSIUS in his *Obſervationes variæ* puts on this paſſage of PLINY, errs widely in the other extreme. One manuſcript of no authority, inſtead of thirteen miles, has aſſigned thirty miles for the compaſs of the walls of ROME: And VOSSIUS underſtands this only of the curvilinear part of the circumference; ſuppoſing, that as the TYBER formed the diameter, there were no walls built on that

ſide. But (1.) this reading is allowed to be contrary to almoſt all the manuſcripts. (2.) Why ſhould PLINY, a conciſe writer, repeat the compaſs of the walls of ROME in two ſucceſſive ſentences? (3.) Why repeat it with ſo ſenſible a variation? (4.) What is the meaning of PLINY's mentioning twice the MILLIARIUM, if a line was meaſured that had no dependence on the MILLIARIUM? (5.) AURELIAN's wall is ſaid by VOPISCUS to have been drawn *laxiore ambitu*, and to have comprehended all the buildings and ſuburbs on the north ſide of the TYBER; yet its compaſs was only fifty miles; and even here critics ſuſpect ſome miſtake or corruption in the text; ſince the walls which remain, and which are ſuppoſed to be the ſame with AURELIAN's, exceed not twelve miles. It is not probable, that ROME would diminiſh from AUGUSTUS to AURELIAN. It remained ſtill the capital of the ſame empire; and none of the civil wars in that long period, except the tumults on the death of MAXIMUS and BALBINUS, ever affected the city. CARACALLA is ſaid by AURELIUS VICTOR to have encreaſed ROME. (6.) There are no remains of ancient buildings which mark any ſuch greatneſs of ROME. VOSSIUS's reply to this objection ſeems abſurd: That the rubbiſh would ſink ſixty or ſeventy feet under ground. It appears from SPARTIAN (*in vita Severi*) that the five-mile ſtone *in via Lavicana* was out of the city. (7.) OLYMPIODORUS and PUBLIUS VICTOR fix the number of houſes in ROME to be betwixt forty and fifty thouſand. (8.) The very extravagance of the conſequences drawn by this critic, as well as LIPSIUS, if they be neceſſary, deſtroys the foundation on which they are grounded, That ROME contained fourteen millions of inhabitants; while the whole kingdom of FRANCE contains only five, according to his computation, &c.

The only objection to the ſenſe which we have affixed above to the paſſage of PLINY, ſeems to lie in this, That PLINY, after mentioning the thirty-ſeven gates of ROME, aſſigns only a reaſon for ſuppreſſing the ſeven old ones, and ſays nothing of the eighteen gates; the ſtreets leading from which terminated, according to my opinion, before they reached the Forum. But as PLINY was writing to the ROMANS who perfectly knew the diſpoſition of the ſtreets, it is not ſtrange he ſhould take a circumſtance for granted which was ſo familiar to every body. Perhaps too, many of theſe gates led to wharfs upon the river,

NOTE [NN], p. 389.

QUINTUS CURTIUS ſays, its walls were ten miles in circumference, when founded by ALEXANDER; lib. iv. cap. 8. STRABO, who had travelled to ALEXANDRIA as well as DIODORUS SICULUS, ſays it was ſcarce four miles long, and in moſt places about a mile broad; lib. xvii. PLINY ſays it reſembled a MACEDONIAN caſſock ſtretching out in the corners; lib. v. cap. 10. Notwithſtanding this bulk of ALEXANDRIA which ſeems but moderate, DIODORUS SICULUS, ſpeaking of its circuit as drawn by ALEXANDER (which it never exceeded, as we learn from AMMIANUS MARCELLINUS, lib. xxii. cap. 16.), ſays it was μηγεθει διαφεροντα, *extremely great*, ibid. The

The reaſon which he aſſigns for its ſurpaſſing all cities in the world (for he excepts not ROME) is, that it contained 300,000 free inhabitants. He alſo mentions the revenues of the kings, to wit 6000 talents, as another circumſtance to the ſame purpoſe: No ſuch mighty ſum in our eyes, even though we make allowance for the different value of money. What STRABO ſays of the neighbouring country means only, that it was well peopled, οικουμενη καλως. Might not one affirm, without any great hyperbole, that the whole banks of the river from GRAVESEND to WINDSOR are one city? This is even more than STRABO ſays of the banks of the lake MÆROTIS, and of the canal to CANOPUS. It is a vulgar ſaying in ITALY, that the king of SARDINIA has but one town in PIEDMONT; for it is all a town. AGRIPPA in JOSEPHUS *de bello* JUDAIC. lib. ii. cap. 16. to make his audience comprehend the exceſſive greatneſs of ALEXANDRIA, which he endeavours to magnify, deſcribes only the compaſs of the city as drawn by ALEXANDER: A clear proof that the bulk of the inhabitants were lodged there, and that the neighbouring country was no more than what might be expected about all great towns, very well cultivated, and well peopled.

NOTE [OO], p. 389.

HE ſays (in NERONE, cap. 30.), that a portico or piazza of it was 3000 feet long; "tanta laxitas ut porticus triplices mil-"liarias haberet." He cannot mean three miles. For the whole extent of the houſe from the PALATINE to the ESQUILINE was not near ſo great. So when VOPISC. in AURELIANO mentions a portico in SALLUST's gardens, which he calls *porticus milliarenſis*, it muſt be underſtood of a thouſand feet. So alſo HORACE:

"Nulla decempedis
"Metata privatis opacam
"Porticus excipiebat Arcton." Lib. ii. ode 15.

So alſo in lib. i. ſatyr. 8.

"Mille pedes in fronte, trecentos cippus in agrum
"Hic dabat."

NOTE [PP], p. 398.

IT appears from CÆSAR's account, that the GAULS had no domeſtic ſlaves who formed a different order from the *Plebes*. The whole common people were indeed a kind of ſlaves to the nobility, as the people of POLAND are at this day: And a nobleman of GAUL had ſometimes ten thouſand dependents of this kind. Nor can we doubt, that the armies were compoſed of the people as well as of the nobility. The fighting men amongſt the HELVETII were the fourth part of the inhabitants: A clear proof that all the males of military age bore arms. See CÆSAR *de bello Gall.* lib. i.

We may remark, that the numbers in CÆSAR's *Commentaries* can be more depended on than thoſe of any other ancient author, becauſe of the GREEK tranſlation which ſtill remains, and which checks the LATIN original.

NOTE [QQ]. p. 401.

THE inhabitants of MARSEILLES loſt not their ſuperiority over the GAULS in commerce and the mechanic arts, till the ROMAN dominion turned the latter from arms to agriculture and civil life. See STRABO, lib. iv. That author, in ſeveral places, repeats the obſervation concerning the improvement ariſing from the ROMAN arts and civility: And he lived at the time when the change was new, and would be more ſenſible. So alſo PLINY: "Quis enim non, "communicato orbe terrarum, majeſtate ROMANI imperii, profeciſſe "vitam putet, commercio rerum ac ſocietate feſtæ pacis, omniaque "etiam, quæ occulta antea fuerant, in promiſcuo uſu facta. Lib. "xiv. prœm. Numine deûm electa (ſpeaking of ITALY) quæ cœ-"lum ipſum clarius faceret, ſparſa congregaret imperia, rituſque "molliret, & tot populorum diſcordes, feraſque linguas ſermonis "commercio contraheret ad colloquia, & humanitatem homini da-"ret; breviterque, una cunctarum gentium in toto orbe patria "fieret;" lib. ii. cap. 5. Nothing can be ſtronger to this purpoſe than the following paſſage from TERTULLIAN who lived about the age of SEVERUS. "Certè quidem ipſe orbis in promptu eſt, cultior de die "& inſtructior priſtino. Omnia jam pervia, omnia nota, omnia ne-"gotioſa. Solitudines famoſas retro fundi amœniſſimi obliteraverunt, "ſilvas arva domuerunt, feras pecora fugaverunt; arenæ ſeruntur, "ſaxa panguntur, paludes eliquantur, tantæ urbes, quantæ non caſæ "quondam. Jam nec inſulæ horrent, nec ſcopuli terrent; ubique "domus, ubique populus, ubique reſpublica, ubique vita. Summum "teſtimonium frequentiæ humanæ, oneroſi ſumus mundo, vix nobis "elementa ſufficiunt; et neceſſitates arctiores, et querelæ apud "omnes, dum jam nos natura non ſuſtinet." De anima, cap. 30. The air of rhetoric and declamation which appears in this paſſage, diminiſhes ſomewhat from its authority, but does not entirely deſtroy it. The ſame remark may be extended to the following paſſage of ARISTIDES the ſophiſt, who lived in the age of ADRIAN. "The "whole world," ſays he, addreſſing himſelf to the ROMANS, "ſeems "to keep one holiday; and mankind, laying aſide the ſword which "they formerly wore, now betake themſelves to feaſting and to joy. "The cities, forgetting their ancient animoſities, preſerve only one "emulation, which ſhall embelliſh itſelf moſt by every art and orna-"ment: Theatres every where ariſe, amphitheatres, porticoes, aque-"ducts, temples, ſchools, academies; and one may ſafely pronounce "that the ſinking world has been again raiſed by your auſpicious "empire. Nor have cities alone received an encreaſe of ornament "and beauty; but the whole earth, like a garden or paradiſe, is "cultivated and adorned: Inſomuch, that ſuch of mankind as are "placed out of the limits of your empire (who are but few) ſeem "to merit our ſympathy and compaſſion."

It is remarkable, that though DIODORUS SICULUS makes the inhabitants of ÆGYPT, when conquered by the ROMANS, amount only to three millions; yet JOSEPH. *de bello Jud.* lib. ii. cap. 16. ſays, that

that its inhabitants, excluding those of ALEXANDRIA, were seven millions and a half, in the reign of NERO; and he expressly says, that he drew this account from the books of the ROMAN publicans who levied the poll-tax. STRABO, lib. xvii. praises the superior police of the ROMANS with regard to the finances of ÆGYPT, above that of its former monarchs: And no part of administration is more essential to the happiness of a people. Yet we read in ATHENÆUS (lib. i. cap. 25.), who flourished during the reign of the ANTONINES, that the town MAREIA, near ALEXANDRIA, which was formerly a large city, had dwindled into a village. This is not, properly speaking, a contradiction. SUIDAS (AUGUST.) says, that the Emperor AUGUSTUS, having numbered the whole ROMAN empire, found it contained only 4,101,017 men (ἀνδρες). There is here surely some great mistake either in the author or transcriber: But this authority, feeble as it is, may be sufficient to counterbalance the exaggerated accounts of HERODOTUS and DIODORUS SICULUS with regard to more early times.

NOTE [RR], p. 401.

LIB. ii. cap. 62. It may perhaps be imagined, that POLYBIUS, being dependent on ROME, would naturally extol the ROMAN dominion. But in the *first* place, POLYBIUS, though one sees sometimes instances of his caution, discovers no symptoms of flattery. *Secondly*, This opinion is only delivered in a single stroke, by the by, while he is intent upon another subject; and it is allowed, if there be any suspicion of an author's insincerity, that these oblique propositions discover his real opinion better than his more formal and direct assertions.

NOTE [SS], p. 403.

I MUST confess, that that discourse of PLUTARCH concerning the silence of the oracles, is in general of so odd a texture, and so unlike his other productions, that one is at a loss what judgment to form of it. It is written in dialogue; which is a method of composition that PLUTARCH commonly but little affects. The personages he introduces advance very wild, absurd, and contradictory opinions, more like the visionary systems or ravings of PLATO than the plain sense of PLUTARCH. There runs also through the whole an air of superstition and credulity, which resembles very little the spirit that appears in other philosophical compositions of that author. For it is remarkable, that though PLUTARCH be an historian as superstitious as HERODOTUS or LIVY, yet there is scarcely in all antiquity a philosopher less superstitious, excepting CICERO and LUCIAN. I must therefore confess, that a passage of PLUTARCH cited from this discourse, has much less authority with me than if it had been found in most of his other compositions.

There is only one other discourse of PLUTARCH liable to like objections, to wit, that *concerning those whose punishment is delayed by the Deity*. It is also writ in dialogue, contains like superstitious, wild

wild visions, and seems to have been chiefly composed in rivalship to PLATO, particularly his last book *De re republica*.

And here I cannot but observe, that Mons. FONTENELLE, a writer eminent for candor, seems to have departed a little from his usual character, when he endeavours to throw a ridicule upon PLUTARCH on account of passages to be met with in this dialogue concerning oracles. The absurdities here put into the mouths of the several personages are not to be ascribed to PLUTARCH. He makes them refute each other; and in general, he seems to intend the ridiculing of those very opinions which FONTENELLE would ridicule him for maintaining. See *Histoire des oracles*.

NOTE [TT], p. 423.

IT is remarkable, that in the remonstrance of the duke of BOURBON and the legitimate princes against this destination of LOUIS the XIVth, the doctrine of the *original contract* is insisted on, even in that absolute government. The FRENCH nation, say they, chusing HUGH CAPET and his posterity to rule over them and their posterity, where the former line fails, there is a tacit right reserved to chuse a new royal family; and this right is invaded by calling the bastard princes to the throne, without the consent of the nation. But the Comte de BOULAINVILLIERS, who wrote in defence of the bastard princes, ridicules this notion of an original contract, especially where applied to HUGH CAPET, who mounted the throne, says he, by the same arts which have ever been employed by all conquerors and usurpers. He got his title, indeed, recognized by the states after he had put himself in possession: But is this a choice or contract? The Comte de BOULAINVILLIERS, we may observe, was a noted republican; but being a man of learning, and very conversant in history, he knew that the people were never almost consulted in these revolutions and new establishments, and that time alone bestowed right and authority on what was commonly at first founded on force and violence. See *Etat de la France*, Vol. III.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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